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Sheikh Hasina's visit to India will see her hold talks on water sharing
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NEARBY

Heavy rain continues to wreak havoc in city

BENGALURU

Heavy rains continued to wreak havoc with parts of Bengaluru receiving continuous downpour on Sunday evening, leading to traffic snarls. The BBMP control room also received two complaints of trees falling in the city.

SOUTH ▸ PAGE 5

He built his school brick by brick

BENGALURU

This teacher, a recipient of this year's national award from the Union Ministry of Education, did not wait for the government to help him improve his school, but did it with the help of locals and donor NGOs. Over the last 12 years, Umesh T.P., teacher at GLPS at Amruthapura, Chitradurga, built the school infrastructure steadily.

BENGALURU ▸ PAGE 2

16-year-old run over by tractor carrying idol

BENGALURU

A 16-year-old was crushed to death under a tractor, which was carrying a Ganesha idol for immersion in Madahalli on the outskirts of the city on Friday. The tractor was allegedly being driven in a negligent and rash manner.

BENGALURU ▸ PAGE 2

EDUCATIONPLUS ▸ PAGE 5

UPA MLAs return to Ranchi for trust vote

BJP holds meet to devise strategy in Jharkhand Assembly

AMARNATH TEWARY
PATNA

Amid a deepening political crisis in Jharkhand, Chief Minister Hemant Soren will seek a trust vote in the Assembly on Monday. With hours left for vote, leaders of the ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) and the Opposition have been in the thick of action in Ranchi, the State capital.

The UPA MLAs, who were camped in a resort in Raipur in the Congress-ruled Chhattisgarh, reached Ranchi on Sunday evening.

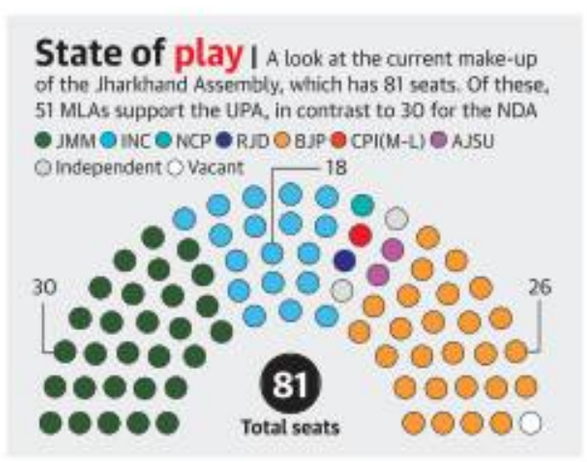
The BJP held a meeting with its legislators to chalk out its strategy for the House.

It is said that all ruling front MLAs will be put up in a place in Ranchi till the trust vote.

The political stalemate and suspense have been continuing in the State ever since the Election Commission conveyed its decision in the office-of-profit allegation against the Chief Minister to Governor Ramesh Bais on August 25. Mr. Bais is yet to make the EC decision public.

"A state of confusion is prevailing in Jharkhand. Our delegation met the Governor (on September 1) and he promised to clear the air in a day or two, but nothing has happened till now. So, we will raise our points in the State Assembly and prove our majority," State Parliamentary Affairs Minister Alamgir Alam told pressmen in Ranchi.

"Mr. Soren's disqualification as a member of the House will not stand in the court and it will be dismissed in hours," a Cabinet Minister said.



Governor's assurance

On September 1, a few UPA leaders had submitted a memorandum to Governor Ramesh Bais, seeking clarification over reports of disqualification of Mr. Soren as a member of the House.

According to UPA leaders, the Governor had assured them that the prevailing air of political uncertainty will be cleared in two days and he left for Delhi.

The EC's move was reportedly prompted by a petition to the Governor by State BJP leaders, seeking Mr. Soren's disqualification over his acquisition of a mine.

Amid lingering fear of poaching by BJP, over 31 UPA MLAs were shifted to a luxury resort in Raipur on August 31.

The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leaders said the BJP might have made a serious attempt to "poach MLAs from UPA in a bid to topple the democratically elected Soren government in a manner similar to that in Maharashtra".

CONTINUED ON ▸ PAGE 8

Cyrus Mistry killed in car accident

Former Tata Sons chairman was travelling to Mumbai when car hit a divider

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI

Cyrus P. Mistry, industrialist and former chairman of Tata Sons, was killed in a road accident about 150 km from Mumbai on Sunday when the car he was travelling in hit a road divider.

Mr. Mistry, 54, along with three others, was headed towards Mumbai from Gujarat.

Two dead

According to the Kasa police, Mr. Mistry and another person named Jahangir Pandole were killed on the spot when the car ran into a road divider on the Charoti bridge near Kasa village in Maharashtra.

Kasa, close to the Gujarat-Maharashtra boundary and on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad highway, is 43 km from Palghar in Maharashtra and about 150 km from Mumbai.

"The car was coming from Gujarat and was headed towards Mumbai. It overtook a vehicle and directly hit a road divider on the bridge. It was not hit by any other vehicle," police constable P.C. Shinde of the Kasa police station said over phone.

"The car was driven by Anahita Pandole and her husband Darius Pandole was in the front passenger seat. Both were injured and were rushed to the Rainbow Hospital in Vapi," he said.

The accident was reported at 3 p.m., he said.

Dr. Anahita is a gynaecologist attached to Mumbai's Breach Candy Hospital. Mr. Pandole is a businessman and has served as an independent director at Tata Global Beverages.

The Pandoles are from the same family.

The Mistry family is yet to offer any comment.

Fatal impact: The wreckage of the car in which industrialist Cyrus Mistry was travelling in, near Palghar on Sunday. • PTI

ANOTHER REPORT ▸ PAGE 9

State to appoint legal experts to handle border row in SC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BELAGAVI

The State government would appoint a team of legal experts to argue before the Supreme Court in the Karnataka-Maharashtra border row, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said in Hubballi on Sunday.

"We have very experienced and skilled legal experts who know the subject in detail. They will be appointed as our counsel in the apex court to argue our case, the Chief Minister said. The case is scheduled to come up for hearing on November 23.

Mr. Bommai said he had discussions with the Advocate-General in this regard and instructions had been given. The State government is studying the HC judgment on the CET issue. We will take a decision to appeal against it after discussions with the Advocate-General and legal experts, the CM said.

Ahead of Bharat Jodo Yatra, Rahul targets PM

Modi spreading hate and fear, he says

SANDEEP PHUKAN
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is weakening the country by spreading hate and fear and that can only help Pakistan and China, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi claimed on Sunday as he set the tone for his upcoming Bharat Jodo Yatra that will be launched on September 7.

Addressing the party's *Mehangai Par Halla Bol* rally at the Ramlila Maidan here, Mr. Gandhi said that the Congress is left with no option but to be among the people as all institutions including judiciary, media and the election commission are "under pressure".

'BRING BACK RAHUL' ▸ PAGE 9

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NEWS IN NUMBERS

Suicides in India

1.64 In lakh, the number of suicides recorded in India in 2021 — an average of nearly 450 daily or 18 every hour. These are the highest figures ever recorded in India. Of those who died by suicide, there were nearly 1.19 lakh males, 45,026 females and 28 transgenders, the National Crime Records Bureau's 'Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India - 2021' report showed. A sharp rise in such deaths has been noticed in 2020 and 2021 owing to the pandemic. In 2020, the number of suicides stood at 1.53 lakh. PTI

Trade deficit widens

28.68 In $ billion, the amount by which the trade deficit in India widened owing to increased crude oil imports, while the country's exports contracted by 1.15% to $3 billion in August, for the first time in over 20 months. According to the preliminary data released by the Commerce Ministry, imports rose by 37% to $61.68 billion in August this year. The trade deficit in August 2021 stood at $11.71 billion. The previous decline in exports was recorded in November 2020. PTI

Road crashes

1.55 In lakh, the number of lives lost in road crashes across India in 2021— an average of 426 daily or 18 every single hour — the highest death figures recorded in a year, according to official data. There were 4.03 lakh road accidents across the country last year in which 3.71 lakh were injured, according to the National Crime Records Bureau's 'Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India - 2021' report. The rate of deaths per thousand vehicles in 2021 (0.53) was higher than that of 2020 (0.45) and 2019 (0.52). PTI

Tax refunds

1.14 In ₹ lakh crore, the refunds issued by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) of the Income Tax department in the first five months of this fiscal. More than 1.97 crore taxpayers were issued refunds between April 1 2022 to August 31 2022. This includes personal and corporate refunds amounting to ₹61,252 crore and ₹53,158 crore respectively. According to officials, about 4.5 crore Income Tax Returns (ITR) were received by the Income Tax Department, by the end of the FY22 filing season on July 31. PTI

Sewage fine

3,500 In ₹ crore, the penalty imposed on the West Bengal government by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) for the huge gap between waste generation and treatment. The panel said that the State does not appear to be prioritising the setting up of sewage and solid waste management facilities. The NGT noted that of 2,758 million litres of sewage generated per day (MLD) in urban areas and a treatment capacity of 1,505 MLD, only 1,268 MLD is being treated. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

CACHE

Deploying 5G in a world built on 4G technology

The switch to a pureplay 5G architecture is no more a question of whether or not, but when and how

THE GIST

- Since 4G's inception in the early 2010s, the number of smartphone users have grown significantly. According to Statista, the total number of smartphone users in the world has nearly doubled from 3.7 billion in 2016 to 6.6 billion in 2022.
- A 5G-based connected future is upon us. That means deploying services in a world filled with 4G compatible devices. So, telecom operators have two options. They can either build a non-standalone (NSA) or a standalone architecture.
- In an NSA framework, the operator can use their existing installed capacities and LTE architecture to deploy 5G services while implementing a new radio access network (RAN). The SA model, on the contrary, is a pureplay 5G architecture that provides operators full range of the fifth-generation capability and lets them slice the network. In this architecture, RAN and the core are completely new.

JOHN XAVIER

Since the dawn of mobile communication in the early 1980s, companies and consumers have been adapting to new ways of sending and receiving information. The first-generation technology of this era let people make and receive phones calls through their mobile handheld devices while the second and third generations added text and multi-media messaging, as well as email services to cell phones. The emergence of 4G in the early part of the past decade changed the mobile-telephone landscape. This paradigmatic shift let users stream and download videos at speeds three times greater than 3G. The Long Term Evolution (LTE) standard-based generation had two important characteristics that set it apart from its predecessors.

4G multiplexing

With 4G-capable cell phones, people could make calls over the Internet instead of via telephone networks. This generation's evolution to 4G+ (LTE advanced), which offered download speeds of 200 to 300 Mbps, made it easier for people to connect and talk over the Internet.

Secondly, 4G's multiplexing capability, technically known as orthogonal frequency division multiplex (OFDM), provided a level of efficiency in achieving high data transfer rates while allowing multiple users to share a common channel. The OFDM modulation scheme divides a channel into several subcarriers. These subcarriers are spaced orthogonally so they don't interfere with one another despite the lack of guard bands between them. "OFDM is a very good choice for a mobile TV air interface. It offers good spectral efficiency, immunity to multi-path, good mobile performance, and it works well in single-frequency networks such as those planned for mobile TV," according to a research paper titled 'Orthogonal Frequency Division Multiplexing and its Applications'. It is this aspect of 4G that lets people use social media, download music in an app, and live-stream videos on mobile devices.

Gadgets galore

Since 4G's inception in the early 2010s, the number of smartphone users have grown significantly. According to data intelligence firm Statista, the total number of smartphone users in the world has nearly doubled in the last seven years to 6.6 billion in 2022, from 3.7 billion in 2016. This number is estimated to rise by another billion by 2027.

Not just users, the number of mobile devices in use have also skyrocketed. The total number of phones and tablets in use is expected to be over 18.2 billion, according to technology market research firm Radicati. When one adds another few billion wearables and Internet of Things (IoT) devices to this mix, the result is a massive data hungry world of gadgets. As the number of connected devices rises, so does our dependence on them to do daily tasks.

The number of devices and things connected to the internet is not confined to the consumer world. Enterprises are also moving to digital channels and optimising the way tasks get done with the help of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), predictive maintenance, and other environmental condition monitoring sensors. For these devices to work in sync with several other applications a far superior networking and connectivity is needed and the decade-old LTE-based generation is ill-prepared to handle workloads and real-time data processing of this magnitude.

Deploying 5G

The latest iteration of mobile connectivity offers low latency, greater download speeds coupled with the ability to connect multiple devices and exchange data in real-time. Building on the multiplexing technology of its predecessor, 5G ushers in a new standard called 5G New Radio (NR), which uses the best capabilities of LTE. 5G NR will enable increased energy savings for connected devices and enhance connectivity. Apart from this, the fifth-generation of mobile communication will use high-frequency millimeter wave (mmWave) bands that operate on wavelengths between 30 GHz and 300 GHz. For comparison, 4G's LTE operates on wavelengths under 6 GHz.

While 5G has been around since the late 2010s, it didn't reach the kind of ubiquity its predecessor enjoyed until mid-2020s. That's because there are fewer 5G-compatible devices in the market compared to 4G ones, and a delayed auctioning and rollout of 5G airwaves is holding people back from using the service.

A 5G-based connected future is upon us. That means deploying services based on the latest generation in a world filled with 4G compatible devices. So, telecom operators and businesses looking to build their services on 5G have two options. They can either build a non-standalone (NSA) or a standalone architecture.

In an NSA framework, the operator can use their existing installed capacities and LTE architecture to deploy 5G services while implementing a new radio access network (RAN). The operations in the core network will be supported by the existing evolved packet core (EPC) from LTE. This short-to-medium term strategy can help operators reduce capital expenditure and lower operating costs that may arise from installing a new core network.

Germany, for example, used the NSA model to roll out 5G services in 2019. Deutsche Telekom leveraged its LTE-based core to deliver service that is not as fast as pure 5G, but which achieved the purpose of providing broad national coverage to a large proportion of the population and that too in a time-bound manner. The national carrier has now started testing 5G SA architecture in select settings.

Standalone model

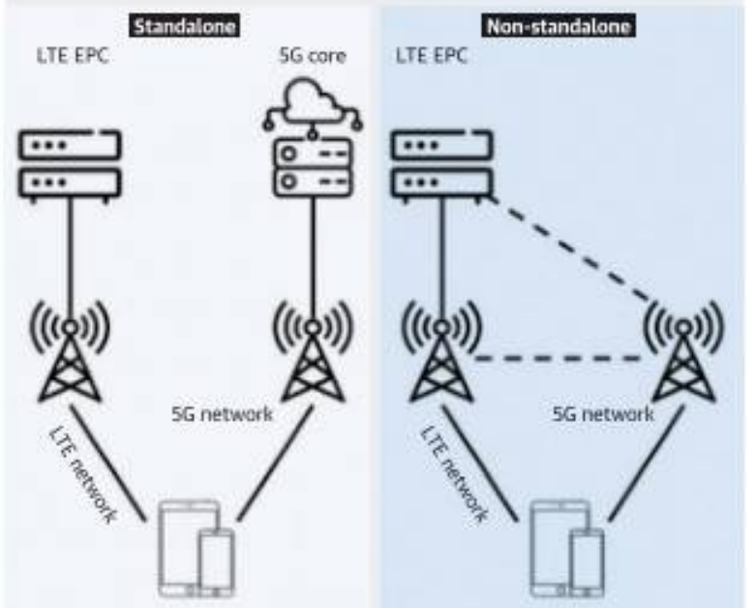
The SA model, on the contrary, is a pureplay 5G architecture that provides operators full range of the fifth-generation's capability and lets them slice the network. In this architecture, RAN and the core are completely new, and there will be a clear separation of different network functions in line with 3GPP recommendations.

U.S.-based Dish Network Corporation deployed a standalone 5G network in 2021. The cloud-native firm is said to be building an Open RAN-based network from scratch, and is looking to run its service on the public cloud. In India, Chinese handset maker Oppo conducted 5G network trials in July 2021 on one of its premium smartphones under the SA network environment provided by Reliance Jio at its 5G Lab in Hyderabad. Reliance Industries Limited plans to expand its 5G network to "every town" in India by the end of 2023, according to the company's Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh Ambani. The firm plans to implement 5G SA architecture to provide better performance than an NSA based set up.

Different countries and firms are at various stages of 5G deployment. The switch to a pureplay 5G SA architecture is no more a question of whether or not, but when and how. Telecom operators will drive 5G deployment towards a standalone future in the next few years. This will simplify their network operations and improve user experience. Operators may also look to leverage network slicing opportunities by creating dedicated segments for specific users and use cases. Each slice could present an opportunity for operators to build a revenue stream. And just like how the mobile device-based communication era made people adapt to the new technology four decades ago, 5G could potentially make consumers connect and exchange information in a new way.

5G architecture

When 5G is deployed through a non-standalone framework, the operator uses the existing installed capacities and LTE architecture. However, in a standalone model, the radio access network and the core will be completely new. It gives operators the full range of 5G's capabilities.



EXPLAINER

The International Monetary Fund's staff-level agreement with Sri Lanka

What are the pre-requisites IMF laid down before the Sri Lankan government? How has India reacted to the agreement?

MEERA SRINIVASAN

The story so far: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on September 1 announced a staff-level agreement with Sri Lanka, months after the island nation's economic crisis intensified this year, following a serious Balance of Payments problem.

What is the staff-level agreement?

It is a formal arrangement by which IMF staff and Sri Lankan authorities agree on a $2.9-billion package that will support Sri Lanka's economic policies with a 48-month arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF).

However, even though the IMF has agreed to support Sri Lanka, the EFF is conditional on many factors. Sri Lanka must take a series of immediate measures that the Fund has deemed necessary to fix fiscal lapses and structural weaknesses – such as raising fiscal revenue, safeguarding financial stability and reducing corruption vulnerabilities. Apart from making domestic policy changes to strengthen the economy, Sri Lanka must also restructure its debt with its multiple lenders. The IMF has said that it will provide financial support to Sri Lanka only after the country's official creditors give financing assurances on debt sustainability, and when the government reaches a collaborative agreement with its private creditors. The process could take several months.

What next?

Sri Lanka has already taken some significant policy measures. Beginning this year, the Central Bank has floated the rupee, raised interest rates sharply, increased electricity tariffs and fuel prices and restored tax cuts introduced during President Gotabaya's time in office. While the government embarks on a path of fiscal consolidation, it has the difficult task of negotiating with a diverse group of creditors, including International Sovereign Bond (ISB) holders, to whom the island owes nearly half of its foreign debt, multilateral-lateral agencies, and foreign governments, mainly China, Japan, and India. While talks with the ISB holders are likely to be legal and technical, discussion with bilateral creditors is a more complex exercise, with geopolitical dimensions.

What have the countries said?

China has signalled its willingness to lend more money to the country but has put the onus of restructuring past debt on Sri Lanka. "We hope Sri Lanka will work actively with China in a similar spirit and work out a feasible solution expeditiously," the Chinese Embassy said after the government firmed up the staff-level agreement with the IMF.

Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe meeting with IMF staff on September 1. • AFP

Japan has pledged to work with Sri Lanka and other creditors, but underscored that it is important for Sri Lanka, in collaboration with the IMF and Paris Club, "to work for the betterment of its economic and fiscal situation while securing transparency." India, too, backs the IMF process and will likely cooperate, although New Delhi has said it is still studying the "evolving, unfolding" story of the IMF agreement. Ministry of External Affairs spokesman Arindam Bagchi said: "India has been advocating for assistance to Sri Lanka but let us see how it progresses. Issues of creditor equitability and transparency are important." This means that India expects Sri Lanka to treat all its creditors equally and fairly. The statement comes amid speculation on whether Colombo might accord preferential treatment to one partner.

The IMF has indicated that creditors also have a role to play in ensuring Sri Lanka's crisis does not deepen.

Is the $2.9-billion a bailout package?

The $2.9 billion agreed upon by both sides, is short of Sri Lanka's expectations of support totalling $3 to $4 billion. In any case, even if the IMF package arrives swiftly, subject to Sri Lanka's success with the "prior actions" spelt out by the Fund, it cannot "bailout" Sri Lanka.

After a pre-emptive sovereign default in April – the island's foreign debt totals $51 billion – Sri Lanka is still grappling with its Balance of Payments crisis. The government has resorted to wide import restrictions, while exports remain limited to the country's traditional basket of tea, garments, and spices.

From the ordinary citizen's point of view, cost of living is soaring. Headline inflation went up to 64.3% in August 2022, and food inflation increased to 93.7%. The World Food Programme estimated that about 30% of Sri Lanka's population, became food insecure, since the crisis worsened this year. Many families, especially those belonging to the working population, are starving.

How then can the IMF package help?

If it comes through, the IMF package will effectively make Sri Lanka credit-worthy again, allowing the government to borrow once again from private creditors, multilateral lenders and bilateral partners. While many see the programme as necessary, few think it will be sufficient for substantive economic recovery. They believe it would push the government to make necessary policy shifts to ensure higher revenue and lesser state spending and address the problem of corruption.

The responsibility of building fiscal strength and resilience is, however, Sri Lanka's. For that, the government must also introspect on its heavy reliance on imports, the status of domestic production, prospects for boosting exports with greater value addition, and ways to address income and wealth inequality.

THE GIST

- The IMF on September 1 announced a staff-level agreement with Sri Lanka, months after the island nation's economic crisis intensified this year.
- The IMF's External Fund Facility is conditional on many factors. Sri Lanka must take a series of immediate measures to fix fiscal lapses and structural weaknesses – such as raising fiscal revenue, safeguarding financial stability and reducing corruption vulnerabilities.
- The IMF package will make Sri Lanka credit-worthy again, allowing the government to borrow once again.

Boy run over by tractor carrying idol for immersion

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A 16-year-old boy was crushed to death under a tractor, which was carrying a Ganesha idol for immersion in Madahalli on the outskirts of the city on Friday.

The deceased was identified as Dinesh, a resident of K.R. Puram. He was seated next to the driver.

According to the police, the tractor was allegedly being driven in a rash and negligent manner, and Dinesh lost his balance, slipped under the front tyre of the vehicle, and was crushed to death.

The others in the procession rushed him to K.R. Puram government hospital, from where he was shifted to Bowring Hospital, where the doctors declared him as brought dead.

The Avalahalli police on Saturday registered a case of rash and negligent driving, death due to negligence, and also under various sections of the Indian Motor Vehicle Act against the driver. The police have seized the vehicle and have arrested the driver for further investigation.

BBMP garbage truck knocks down biker

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Villagers of Doddabelavangala on Sunday staged a protest with the body of a 28-year-old biker, who was killed allegedly after a BBMP truck knocked him down at Mugenahalli gate on the outskirts of the city.

The deceased has been identified as Raju of Manninakunte.

According to reports, the truck knocked down the biker while negotiating a curve. Soon, villagers gathered at the spot and staged the protest demanding compensation.

BBMP officials and the Doddabelanangala police, promised to pay ₹25 lakh compensation and also issued a cheque of ₹5 lakh.

Facing NEP-induced changes and infrastructure challenges

Burden of implementation of education policy is majorly on teachers

JAHNAVI T.R.
KUMAR BURADIKATTI
SATHISH G.T.
BENGALURU/KALABURAGI/HASSAN

The absence of syllabi and modalities is one of the key issues being faced by teachers and institutions in the implementation of NEP. •FILE PHOTO

Post the introduction of the National Education Policy (NEP), the burden of its implementation fell majorly on the teachers, for whom this was a whole new experience too. However, what is evident across educational institutions in the State is that the infrastructure that is available to implement this policy is not adequate. On Teachers' Day, we look at how teachers are managing to make the best out of the situation while striving for the welfare of their students.

A lecturer, who did not want to be named, in Bangalore University said that they were restricting the student intake to one of the NEP integrated science courses, as the lab facilities were not up to the mark in the university. "It is true that a lot of students apply, but how do we teach them what is in the syllabus when our labs are not equipped with the latest tools and instruments?" the lecturer said.

According to a professor at Kannada University, Hampi, the absence of syllabi and modalities is one of the major issues being faced by teachers and institutions in the implementation of the NEP.

'Ideas and directions'

"The NEP is a bunch of ideas and directions. They need to be concretised with specific modalities for each aspect. One free size cannot fit all. Take the instance of PhD course. After getting selected for PhD, the students have to complete a six-month research course work conducted by a doctoral committee where they would be trained for their research. Completion of this course is a must. But, we have no modalities ready as per the NEP 2020. We ourselves cannot prepare them overnight as it involves many things such as course duration, syllabus, and examination pattern. The experts from the University Grants Commission (UGC) have to prepare the concrete modalities and it takes at least one-and-a-half years. Going for implementation of NEP 2020 with little or no preparation is meaningless," he said.

Similar apprehensions were expressed by a professor at Central University of Karnataka, Kalaburagi, with regard to the syllabus preparation in the backdrop of the provision for multiple exit options during the course period.

"At present, we prepare syllabus for three-year degrees and two-year master's degree courses and include all the things required for these degrees. As per NEP, a student studying a 3-year or 4-year degree course has multiple exit options. If a student exits the course after one year or two years, he/she would get a certificate for one year and two years whichever is applicable. In such a situation, it is very difficult to prepare a syllabus that could suit all. As we don't know who will exit and who will continue, we will be unable to provide a special teaching environment for quitting students," he said.

Degree colleges of the Higher Education Department in Karnataka have completed two semesters as per the NEP. However, in most government colleges, students appeared for two papers - Environmental Studies and Digital Fluency - without attending classes. A majority of the government colleges did not have teachers to handle these two mandatory subjects.

In colleges, where the BSc degree was offered, the science faculty did some extra classes to cover the syllabus of these two subjects. It was an arrangement made at the college level in the interest of students. However, the colleges that offered only Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Commerce had no facility to cover these subjects.

"Our students have completed two semesters without attending classes in these two subjects. The intention of introducing these two subjects was good. But, it was not implemented properly," pointed out a principal of a degree college.

New subjects

Further, the proponents of NEP repeatedly said the new policy would encourage students to take up new subjects. A student of Arts can take up a Science subject as an open elective. However, this facility was not available in most of the colleges.

However, M. Shivshankar, lecturer in Department of Life Sciences, BU, said that certain challenges are common when any new method is being implemented and there will be both positives and negatives.

"All of a sudden when they recommend new disciplines and infrastructure, it gets a little difficult to provide them. Teaching of new subjects will be valid only when we bring in the right resource people. For now, we are bringing in experts within departments for this. Although we are making the best use of available resources currently, as teachers, we usually flag the lack of it to the admin department to make sure that it is covered by the time the next batch comes in."

This national award winner built his school brick by brick

He got help from locals and NGOs

JAYANTH R.
BENGALURU

This government lower primary school (GLPS) teacher, recipient of this year's national award from the Union Ministry of Education, did not wait for the government to help him improve the school, but went the extra mile to do it with the help of locals and donor NGOs.

Over the last 12 years, Umesh T.P., teacher at GLPS at Amruthapura, Chitradurga, has built the school infrastructure slowly and steadily.

Mr. Umesh got transferred to Amruthapura, a village 35 km away from the district headquarters, in 2010. Most residents here belong to the backward Golla community. To this day, the village has no bus service and though there is a railway station here, hardly any trains stop here.

Mr. Umesh says the school was in a poor state when he arrived here, but it has slowly developed infrastructure, including a building, toilets, drinking water, school compound, and others, with the supports of various NGOs and other organisations.

Amidst pandemic

During the pandemic, he stayed back in school and taught classes in shifts whenever he could. He executed initiatives like Vidyagama, Jagali school and Gudi school, besides online classes for the students. He has also written six books and got the State's Uttam Teacher Award in 2021.

Umesh T.P. is recipient of this year's national award from the Union Ministry of Education.

"There is no point in just cribbing about a lack of infrastructure in the school. Twelve years ago, I was teaching students in tin sheds. Then, with the help of various NGOs, we constructed the building and then provided all the basic infrastructure. Today not only is our infrastructure good, our students are confident. They are giving programmes on All-India Radio."

Social reform

Apart from teaching, Mr. Umesh has put in efforts to eradicate the system of segregation of women outside the village during menstruation in Golla community. "I created awareness in the community and finally the system is eradicated," he claims.

Mr. Umesh will be presented the national award by the President on September 5 at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.

READ MORE IN-DEPTH CONTENT AT THE HINDU'S WEBSITE
www.thehindu.com

Text & Context

A weekday feature on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) which includes explainers, special articles and a quiz. In the latest issue (September 5, Monday), the following explainers are available:

- **Cache |** Deploying 5G in a world built on 4G technology bit.ly/deploy5g

Online exclusives

- **Women Uninterrupted Podcast |** Are women conditioned to be submissive? bit.ly/podwomen
- **Watch |** How was Mikhail Gorbachev different from other Soviet Union leaders? bit.ly/gorbyvid
- **Talking Politics with Nistula Hebbar |** Who will be the next Congress president? bit.ly/nextcongchief
- **Watch |** The Rohingya must return, India can play a big role: Sheikh Hasina bit.ly/hasinavid
- *You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access the article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.*

BMTC depot manager suspended

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

In connection with the alleged suicide of a driver attached to the Channasandra depot, the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) has suspended the depot manager Mallikarjuna.

Tree-cutting: BBMP invites objections

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has invited objections to a proposal to axe 221 trees inside the premises of railway land, for the construction of new railway lines and a railway overbridge between Bengaluru Cantonment and Baiyappanahalli station.

The Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF), BBMP, who is also the tree officer, published the public notice on Friday, regarding the tree cutting as requested by SWR.

The public can file objections within 10 days from the date of publication of the notification.

A senior BBMP official said: "The request is from the SWR to cut 221 trees. A majority of the trees are indigenous species and the removal is to construct new railway lines and an overbridge."

Woman, daughters found dead

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Hosapalya villagers were in shock after a 38-year-old woman and her two minor daughters were found dead in a field, on the outskirts of the city on Sunday morning.

The deceased has been identified as Roopa and her two daughters Harsihta, 6, and Spoorthi, 4. The Magadi police, who have registered a case of murder and suicide, said that Ms. Roopa was the wife of Lokesh, a farmer.

A probe revealed that the couple got married eight years ago and had no major issues. The couple had even visited the Tirupati temple a few days ago.

On Sunday, when Mr. Lokesh was out of station for work, Ms. Roopa went to a nearby field with the children, leaving her father-in-law at home, according to the police. When she did not return home, the father-in-law asked the neighbours to look for her. The neighbours searched and found her dead along with the children in the field.

According to the police, Ms. Roopa poisoned her daughters, before ending her life.

The police shifted the bodies for post-mortem and are waiting to question Mr. Lokesh.

(Those in distress or those having suicidal tendencies can call Arogya Sahayavani Ph.: 104 for help)

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that, my clients have agreed to purchase the Schedule Property from its Owner: **Smt.Sudha.S W/o Sri.Eshwar.N,** residing at: No.17, Chartered Sannidhi Apartment, Flat No.C1, 2nd Floor, Basavanagudi, Bangalore-560004.

Apart from the said Owner, if any other person/s have any manner of right, title and or interest or claim or charge or lien over the Schedule property or otherwise have any lawful objection/s for sale of the Schedule Property by the aforesaid Owner, they are hereby called upon to file their objection/s in writing, along with the photocopies of documents on which they rely, with the undersigned, within 14days from the date of publication of this notice. Objection/s received thereafter will not be binding on my clients.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the residential property bearing Municipal No.65, PID No.48-37-65, measuring East to West 50ft and North to South 43ft 6inches,in all measuring 2175 Sq.ft., situated at 4th Cross, Lalbagh Road, Bangalore and bounded on:

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, **NIDHI** Dwivedi, W/O. Abhishek Dwivedi, R/O.B-209, Samruddhi Home Uplands, Devasthangalu, Blr-87, have changed name to Nidhi Tiwari vide affvt dtd 25/08/22.

I, **Anilkumar** G R S/o Ravi, R/o: , 1074, Nallurutail, Majjigapura, Mandya, Karnataka - 571607, changed my name to Anil Jacob for all purposes

I, **Vidya** R D/o Rangaswammy, R/o: Vikasasowdha, near metro station, urban development department, 440 room, 4th floor, Bangalore-560001, hereby undertake that I want to change my name to Tanish R and gender as male. I, Vidya R henceforth be known as Tanish R S/o Rangaswammy.

I, **Shivalingappa** S/o Annaraya, R/o: Skylark Zenith, 708 A Block, Basapura Road Near Hosa Road Junction, Bengaluru-560100, changed my name to Shivalingappa Goudagaon for all purposes.

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TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited for (https://etenders.kerala.gov.in) 1.CONSTRUCTION OF GODOWN BUILDING **(Tender ID- 2022_TSC_506226_1 & Last Date of Submission-21.09.2022 at 3 PM)**
2. DESIGN, SUPPLY, FABRICATION AND COMMISIONING OF FOUR 7100O-LTR SS CIRCULAR TANK FOR STORAGE OF IMFL AND FIVE 1000-LTR SS OVERHEAD TANKS FOR THE BOTTLING LINES **(Tender ID- 2022_TSC_506243_1 & Last Date of Submission 13.09.2022 at 3 PM)**
3. ASBESTOSE ROOF LEAK PROOFING & SIDE WALL SHEETING WORKS IN MOLASSESS STORAGE AREA, **(Tender ID-2022_TSC_506261_1& Last Date of Submission 13.09.2022 at 3 PM)**
4. FRP LINING WORK OF TANK NO.11 **(Tender ID-2022_TSC_506274_1& Last Date Of Submission-13.09.2022 at 3 PM)**
5. SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING OF TWO SEMI AUTOMATIC IMFL BOTTLING LINE MACHINERIES **(500ML & 1000ML) (Tender ID-2022_TSC_506552_1 & Last Date of Submission 14.09.2022 at 3 PM)**
6. DESIGN, SUPPLY, FABRICATION AND ERECTION OF MEZZANINE FLOOR AT EMPTY BOTTLE STORAGE AREA **(TenderID-2022_TSC_506558_1& Last Date of Submission 14.09.2022 at 3 PM)**
7. DESIGN, FABRICATION, SUPPLY, ERECTION AND COMMISSIONING OF REGERNERATIVE TYPE DEMINERALISATION WATER PLANT OF CAPACITY 10 m3/hr with fully automated **(Tender ID 2022_TSC_506569_1& Last Date of Submission 14.09.2022 at 3 PM)**
For more details contact office/website.
Thiruvalla,02.09.2022 (sd) MD

Election Commission of India | State Election Commission, Karnataka | Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike

Have you enrolled your name in the electoral roll ?

Check it out...

- BBMP under the guidelines of the State Election Commission has published the ward-wise draft voter list for the upcoming general election of BBMP and has extended the period for filing claims and objections upto 09.09.2022, the public / voters can utilize this opportunity.
- The draft voter list is uploaded on the BBMP website: www.bbmp.gov.in and a copy of the draft voter list is made available for public inspection at all E.R.O's / A.E.R.O's / All Ward Offices. The public / voters can submit their objections accordingly.
- As per the direction of Election Commission of India special summary revision is going on, so the public/voters can take advantage of this opportunity.
- Link your Aadhaar number with Voter ID card voluntarily and help to prepare error free electoral roll.
- All voters can link their Aadhaar card number to their Voter ID card through the Voter Helpline App.

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Register Online or check your details https://voterportal.eci.gov.in

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

Untangling Kerala's Lokayukta controversy

The State's Lokayukta Act needs to be brought on a par with the Lokpal Act

P.D.T. ACHARY

The Kerala Legislative Assembly passed the Kerala Lok Ayukta (Amendment) Bill on August 30, amid a boycott by the Congress-led Opposition. The amendments were related to the competent authority to consider Lok Ayukta recommendations. In the case of any unfavourable decision from the Lok Ayukta against the Chief Minister, the competent authority will now be the Legislative Assembly instead of the Governor as is prescribed in the existing Act. In this article published on February 23, 2022, P.D.T. Achary gives us detailed explainer on the history of the Lok Ayukta and its current troubled legalities. Edited excerpts:

The controversy surrounding the amendment to the Lokayukta Act of Kerala – effected through an ordinance –has raised the political temperature in the State with the Opposition accusing the Government of trying to whittle away at the powers of the Lokpal. The Government, on the other hand, claims that through the amendment, a provision in the Act which is unconstitutional has been excised as it gave power to the Lokpal to give directions to the Governor to remove a Chief Minister or a Minister on being found guilty of corruption. This issue has sparked off a noisy debate in the media in the State which has, in fact, generated more heat than light. The Lokayukta has indirectly expressed its resentment over the attempt to take away some of its powers.

The background

The Lokpal-Lokayukta issue has always generated intense debate in the country. In fact, this term was first used in a report of the Administrative Reforms Commission headed by Morarji Desai as far back as in 1966. Political corruption had become rampant by then and it was thought that a credible system of an ombudsman should be established to redress public grievances against public officials and Ministers of the government. The first Bill on Lokpal was introduced in the Lok Sabha in 1968 which lapsed with the dissolution of the House. The idea of a Lokpal has had a long journey; finally, after 45 years the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Bill was passed by Parliament in 2013. Anna Hazare's movement and the active involvement of civil society generated a lot of moral pressure on the Government which ultimately led to the passing of the Bill.

In order to get a clearer perspective on the Kerala Lokayukta controversy, it is necessary to understand the scheme of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act enacted by Parliament. The long title of the Act says: "An Act to provide for the establishment of a body of Lokpal for the Union and Lokayukta for States to inquire into allegations of corruption against certain public functionaries...." Thus, the Lokpal is conceived of as a body which will inquire into allegations of corruption. It is basically an investigative body whose task is to conduct prompt and fair investigation and the prosecution of cases of corruption.

However, the Lokpal is no ordinary investigative body. It is headed by the incumbent Chief Justice of India or a retired judge. It has eight members, four of whom are judicial members. Thus the whole system is studded with judges or judicial men. The Lokpal has an inquiry wing and a prosecution wing to deal with investigation and prosecution, respectively. The director of prosecution files the case in the special court based on the findings of the Lokpal.

The Lokpal has jurisdiction to inquire into allegations of corruption against the Prime Minister, Ministers, Members of Parliament, Group A, B, C and D officers and officials of the central government. After the conclusion of the investigation, the Lokpal may file a case in the special court in case the findings disclose the commission of offence under the Prevention of Corruption Act by the Prime Minister, Ministers or Members of Parliament. However, the Lokpal does not have the power to ask the President to remove the Prime Minister or a Minister from office.

The Lokpal and Lokayukta Act delegates the power to States to establish by law the Lokayukta to deal with complaints relating to corruption against public functionaries. Some States already have established Lokayuktas. For example, Maharashtra in 1971, and Kerala in 1999.

In Kerala, the implications

Now, in the background of the Lokpal Act let us examine the Lokayukta controversy in Kerala. Section 14 of the Act which has now been amended said that if the Lokayukta is satisfied on the complaint against the public servant being substantiated that he should not continue to hold the post held by him, he shall make a declaration to that effect in his report to the competent authority who shall accept it and act upon it. In other words, if the public servant is the Chief Minister or a Minister, he shall forthwith resign his office. It may be noted here that such a provision does not exist in any of the State laws or the Lokpal Act of the Centre.

This provision in the State law has serious legal and constitutional implications. Two important points need to be made here. One, an investigative body does not have the legal authority to direct the public servant to resign his post on the basis of its findings. It can only submit its findings to the competent authority or, as is provided in the Lokpal Act, file a case in the special court. The Lokayukta is basically an investigative body with certain powers to carry out an investigation into cases relating to the Prevention of Corruption Act. The only special feature of this body is that it is headed by a retired judge of the Supreme Court or a retired Chief Justice of a High Court. But that does not alter the basic character of the Lokayukta as an investigative body. It does not and cannot enjoy the powers of the higher courts which alone can issue such directions in the nature of writs.

Two, the Chief Minister or a Minister holds office during the pleasure of the Governor (Article 164). The Constitution of India does not contemplate any external pressure on the Governor to withdraw his pleasure. The Sarkaria Commission had suggested that the Governor can dismiss a Chief Minister only when he loses his majority in the Assembly and refuses to step down. The Supreme Court has accepted this recommendation of the Sarkaria Commission. Another occasion when the Governor could withdraw his pleasure is when the Chief Minister is disqualified from being a member of the House on account of his having been convicted in a criminal case and sentenced to not less than two years of imprisonment. In other words, a Chief Minister cannot be asked to resign when he enjoys a majority in the House. The Governor, being a high constitutional authority, cannot be compelled by a law to act in a particular manner so far as his constitutional duties and functions are concerned. No agency created by a law made by the Assembly, particularly an investigative body, can declare that its decision be carried out by the Governor. It would amount to a violation of the Constitution.

Thus, Section 14 of the Kerala Lokayukta Act, 1999 suffered from serious legal infirmities and it is only proper that the government of the day revisited this provision.

Provisions that are moot

There are some other provisions as well which may not stand legal scrutiny. For example, this law includes the office bearers of political parties within its definition of 'public servant'. The Lokayukta law was enacted to inquire into cases of corruption of public functionaries such as Ministers, legislators, etc. who are covered by the Prevention of Corruption Act. This Act does not include office-bearers of political parties in its definition clause. Basically, the Prevention of Corruption Act deals with corruption in the government and allied agencies, statutory bodies, elected bodies, etc. The functionaries of political parties do not come within the mischief of this law. So, it is difficult to understand how they can be brought within the sweep of the Lokayukta Act. Another problematic provision in this law is the one which deals with the reports of Lokayukta (Section 12). It says that the Lokayukta shall, on the allegation of corruption being substantiated, send the findings along with recommendation of action to the competent authority who is required to take action as recommended by the Lokayukta. It further says that if the Lokayukta is satisfied by the action taken by the competent authority, he shall close the case. The question is how the Lokayukta can close a corruption case which is a criminal case and which invites imprisonment for three to seven years. The Lokpal files the case in the court after the investigation. There is no provision in the central law under which the Lokpal can close the case before it reaches the court. The Lokayukta not being a court does not have the legal capacity to close the corruption case under any circumstances.

In fact the whole controversy could have been avoided if an objective and dispassionate analysis of this law had been made by all the stakeholders. The Kerala Lokayukta Act should be re-examined by a committee of the Assembly and should be brought on a par with the Lokpal Act. A legislation which seeks to punish corrupt functionaries should be placed above controversies.

P.D.T. Achary is former Secretary General, Lok Sabha

THE GIST

- The Lokpal is conceived of as a body which will inquire into allegations of corruption. It is basically an investigative body whose task is to conduct prompt and fair investigation and the prosecution of cases of corruption. The Lokpal and Lokayukta Act delegates the power to States to establish by law the Lokayukta to deal with complaints relating to corruption against public functionaries.
- Section 14 of the Lokayukta Act which has now been amended said that if the Lokayukta is satisfied on the complaint against the public servant being substantiated that he should not continue to hold the post held by him. However, an investigative body does not have the legal authority to direct the public servant to resign his post on the basis of its findings. Also in cases involving a Chief Minister, the Governor can dismiss him only when he loses his majority in the Assembly and refuses to step down.
- There are some other provisions which may not stand legal scrutiny. For example, this law includes the office bearers of political parties within its definition of 'public servant'. The Lokayukta law comes under the Prevention of Corruption Act which does not include office-bearers of political parties in its definition clause.

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

Hobson's choice is no choice at all

Don't let your relationship with the language turn sour!

S. UPENDRAN

What is the meaning and origin of 'Hobson's choice'? (K. Indumathi, Trichy)

This expression, which has been part of the English language for well over five hundred years, is seldom heard nowadays. When you say that something is 'Hobson's choice', what you are suggesting is that it is no choice at all. If you do not take what has been offered or given, you do not get anything at all. You either take what has been offered to you or go home empty handed – there is no real alternative.

We didn't want to include Venkatesh in the team. But it was a case of Hobson's choice. Three of our players were injured, and he was the only one who was fit.

If it's a blue car that you'd like to hire, then it's a Hobson's choice, I'm afraid. This is the only one that's available.

Thomas Hobson was a stable owner who lived in England in the late 16th century. He rented horses from his stable to people who needed them – these were mostly students from Cambridge. Hobson took good care of his animals, and to ensure that none of them was overworked, he followed a strict rotation policy. Whenever a rented horse was returned, it was taken to the end of the line. The horse that was to be rented next would be at the front of the line and placed near the stable door. When someone came for a horse, he was instructed to take the horse near the door. If the individual did not like the horse and requested for another animal, Hobson told him to try his luck at some other stable. As far as Hobson was concerned, the customer had a choice – he could either take the horse near the stable door or go home empty handed. In other words, Hobson had a strict 'take it or leave it' policy.

How is the word 'sour' pronounced? (Mukesh Singh, Kanpur)

The easiest way to pronounce the word is to make it rhyme with 'shower', 'power' and 'tower'. Some people in our country make it rhyme with 'sore', 'pore' and 'bore'. It is wrong to do so. We normally associate sour with taste – anything that has a sharp or tangy taste, we label as 'sour'. The fruit that immediately comes to mind when we hear the word 'sour' is the lemon. A mango that is not ripe usually tastes sour. The word can also be used in other contexts as well. It can be used to describe an individual. For example, when you describe someone's face as being 'sour', what you are suggesting is that the individual looks unfriendly or bad tempered.

Why Kamala married that sour-faced Hari is still a mystery.

My boss gave me a sour look when I walked into his room.

'Sour' can also be used to talk about relationships. When you say that the relationship between two people has soured, what you are suggesting is that it is no longer as good as it was earlier – they are no longer as friendly as they used to be. The relationship has become strained, and things have become rather unpleasant.

After the divorce, Vinay's attitude to life changed completely – it soured.

With the passage of time, the relationship between the partners soured.

I am not a teacher, but an awakener.
-Robert Frost

upendrankye@gmail.com

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

THE DAILY QUIZ

September 5, the birthday of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, is observed as Teachers' Day in India. A quiz on the academician and philosopher, who served as the second President of India

1 A man with impeccable academic credentials, what simple reason is Dr. Radhakrishnan said to have given when asked why he chose philosophy for his Master's degree?

2 Dr. Radhakrishnan held various academic posts in his illustrious career. Aged just 21, in which eminent Chennai college did he get his first academic appointment?

3 Dr. Radhakrishnan's first book was about which eminent polymath and Nobel Laureate?

4 It is said that as Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Dr. Radhakrishnan employed a novel technique to settle debates if they were getting vocal and were creating chaos. What did he do?

5 Seeing the surprised look on the face of an influential Asian leader after he was patted on the cheek by Dr. Radhakrishnan, the latter said 'Mr. Chairman, don't be alarmed, I did the same to Stalin and the Pope!". Name the leader.

6 Dr. Radhakrishnan was nominated for the Nobel Prize 27 times (including multiple nominations in a year) with 16 coming in a single category. Which category?

7 What achievement does Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam share with Dr. Radhakrishnan as far as civilian awards go?

◄ Dr. Radhakrishnan was awarded this coveted prize for having 'contributed to the cross-fertilisation of eastern and western thought'. Name the honour.

Compiled by: V.V. Ramanan

Please send in your answers to the **dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in**

Questions and Answers to the September 2 edition of the daily quiz: 1. The leader associated with the period of the 'Great Purge'. **Ans: Joseph Stalin; the objective was to solidify his power in the country and remove remaining influences of Trotsky and other political rivals**
2. The reason why 'glasnost' was adopted by Gorbachev as a policy. **Ans: To enable more transparency in government institutions/activities in the Soviet Union**
3. The author of *The Nose*. **Ans: Nikolai Gogol**
4. The liberal political party formed by Gorbachev and business oligarch Alexander Lebedev. **Ans: Independent Democratic Party of Russia**
5. The failed coup of 1991, which was an attempt by hardliners of the Soviet Union's Communist Party to forcibly seize control from Gorbachev. **Ans: August Coup**
6. In 1990, Gorbachev was awarded this prestigious prize. **Ans: Nobel Peace Prize**
7. The political reform movement initiated by Gorbachev to restructure the Soviet political system. **Ans: Perestroika**
Visual: Gorbachev filmed a commercial for this restaurant chain. **Ans: Pizza Hut**

Early Birds: Srijan Patra| Jharna Kamdar| Akash Kumar Rai| Sudhi Agarwal

BJP aiming to wrest 50 seats it narrowly lost

Party executive meet expected to finalise a road map to win these Assembly constituencies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

As the battle intensifies on the State's political turf ahead of the 2023 Assembly elections, the ruling BJP is preparing the ground to wrest from the Opposition about 50 constituencies where it narrowly lost or stood second in the 2018 elections.

The State executive that is meeting here next week is expected to finalise a road map to win these constituencies. Party sources said that the party had identified its strengths and weaknesses in these constituencies, and strategies would be evolved to win them, besides retaining the 120 seats that the party had in the current Assembly.

BJP leaders B.S. Yediyurappa, Nalin Kumar Kateel, and Basavaraj Bommai at a meeting in Bengaluru on Sunday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"The State executive in Bengaluru will more or less launch the election preparation and spadework required since we will have only two more State executives before the general elections," the sources added.

These issues are learnt to have figured when veteran leader B. S. Yediyurappa chaired a meeting of BJP leaders, including Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and party State president Nalin Kumar Kateel, on Sunday. This was the first meeting chaired by Mr. Yediyurappa after he was appointed to the party's parliamentary board and the Central Election Committee. Party sources said that informal discussions were held on various strategies that could be adopted by the party in the coming months.

BJP spokesman M.G. Mahesh told *The Hindu* that Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and Mr. Yediyurappa would tour 50 constituencies each starting from September 7. As part of the State-wide strategy to boost the party's prospects, the party would hold a Dalit morcha convention in Mysuru, yuva morcha convention in Belagavi and mahila morcha convention in Hubballi, besides holding a raitha morcha convention. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally in Mangaluru has been a real morale booster for the party, which has been jolted after the murder of Praveen Nettaru," he said.

The BJP, which has planned six Janotsava conventions across the State to highlight the government's achievements, is expecting a crowd of about two lakh on September 8 when the first such convention will be held at Doddaballapur.

Seventh ACCS Design Challenge announced

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The Advanced Computing and Communications Society (ACCS) has announced the seventh annual ACCS Design Challenge (ADC 2022), to be hosted at IIIT-Bangalore.

Proposals for ADC 2022 are invited in the domains of healthcare, energy management, smart transportation systems, IOT, agriculture and wearable technologies.

Proposals must be received on or before September 10 and they can be submitted after registering the team at www.accsindia.org/adc2022/submit_proposal

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, SEP. 05	
RISE 06:09	SET 18:28
RISE 14:07	SET 00:39
TUESDAY, SEP. 06	
RISE 06:09	SET 18:27
RISE 15:10	SET 01:41
WEDNESDAY, SEP. 07	
RISE 06:09	SET 18:26
RISE 16:09	SET 02:46

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	23
Mysuru	31	21
Bengaluru	30	21

Bengaluru Today
28°C The weather will be comfortable and humid. Night will be pleasant. Few spells of moderate rain and thundershower to occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
27°C A comfortable but humid weather to prevail. Night will be pleasant. Intermittent spells of heavy rain and thundershower will occur.

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'Conduct probe into letters alleging corruption'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Accusing the Education Department, headed by Minister B.C. Nagesh, of becoming a den of corruption, Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah on Sunday urged the State government to announce a judicial inquiry, headed by a High Court judge, to probe into the letters, alleging corruption, by the contractors' association and the private schools' association. He said: "It seems no work, including issuing permission to private schools and pension for retired teachers, is happening without a bribe. The department, which illegally collects bribe to allow starting a private school, is collecting money after accusing the schools of indulging in irregularities".

"Amidst the controversy surrounding the revision of textbooks, corruption has increased in the department. Government has not answered to the letter by the contactors' association that has alleged 40% commission in public works," the former Chief Minister said on Twitter.

The Minister created controversy over textbooks, the Bhagavad Gita, and issues related to madrassas to divert attention from corruption in his department, he added.

"Hindutva is only a mask to cover the corruption," he alleged.

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Last date of submitting online application:
January 17, 2023

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND NEURO SCIENCES, (Institute of National Importance)
BENGALURU-560029
NOTICE
Shri. K. Chandrashekhar, working as Hospital Assistant in NIMHANS, has remained absent from duty since 14.04.2021. Despite having issued multiple notices in this regard, he has not resumed his duty. Now, he is hereby given a last chance to report for duty before 20.09.2022 and submit explanation for unauthorized absence, failing which stern disciplinary action including termination / dismissal from service under relevant CCS (CCA) rules will be taken against him.
Sd/-, Registrar

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Forest Dept. to scale down leopard hunt

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BELAGAVI

After 30 days of looking for a leopard in the golf course in Belagavi, the Forest Department has decided to abandon the hunt, deducing that the wild animal may have moved out of the city. The leopard is said to have attacked a mason in Jadhav Nagar on August 5. The department has come to this conclusion, after a peasant couple had said that they saw the leopard on a field near Mandaoli Road. Officers have deduced that the leopard has gone towards the Bhutramanahatti forests, away from the city.

On Sunday, the Forest Department conducted a large combing operation as a last ditch effort. It employed over 250 personnel from the Forest and Police departments, to sift through the bushes and trees in the golf course. The personnel spent over six hours combing the area, but did not see the leopard.

THE HINDU
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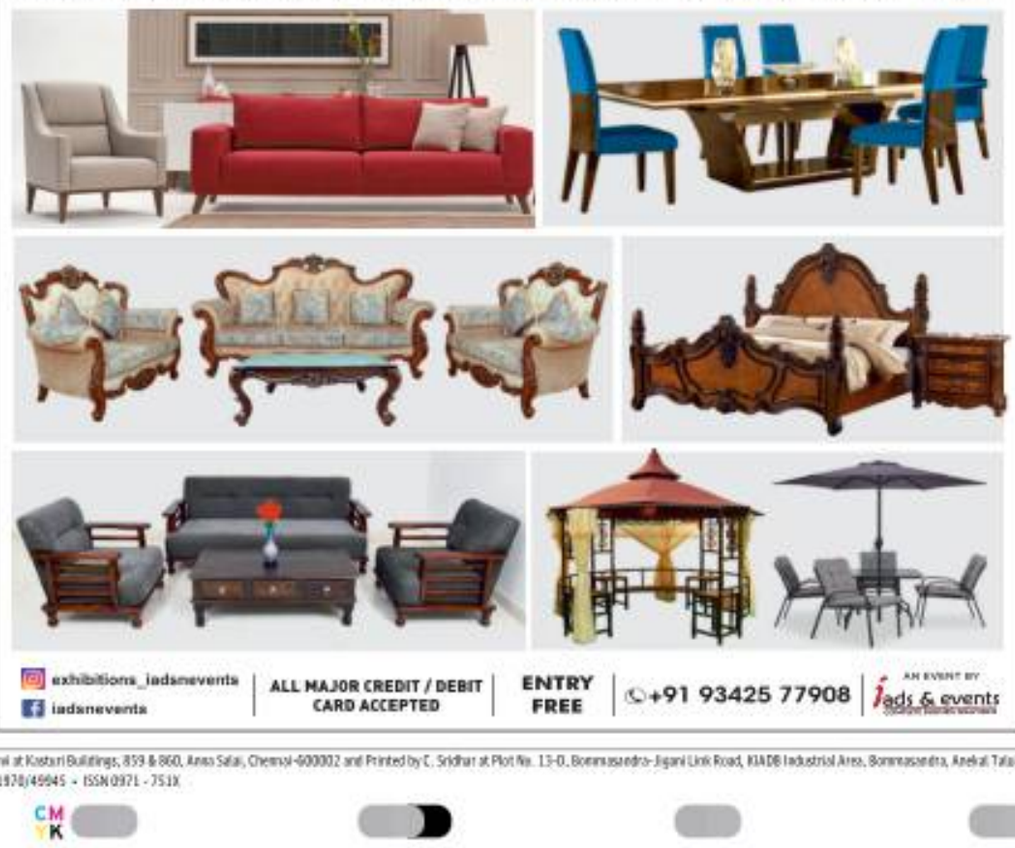
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It has been five years since assailants killed editor-activist Gauri Lankesh at her residence in Bengaluru. Her death mobilised people in defence of freedom of expression and the State also saw strong protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, in 2019-2020. However, attacks on freedom of expression have also been on the rise. On the fifth anniversary of Gauri Lankesh's assassination, K.V. Aditya Bharadwaj and Rishikesh Bahadur Desai document some instances.

'Civil liberties have deteriorated in State'

Vigilante elements have been emboldened, says PUCL chief

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Civil liberties have deteriorated in Karnataka over the last few years, human rights and civil rights activists in the State contend.

"While vigilante elements have been emboldened, there is also an increasing trend of authoritarianism of the State in criminalising intimate decisions of individuals and indiscriminate use of draconian laws against dissenters. And there is a collusion between these two forces," said Arvind Narrain, president, People's Union of Civil Liberties (PUCL), Karnataka.

A file photo of the Students Federation of India staging a protest against the killing of Gauri Lankesh in Bengaluru.

Ever since Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai made the infamous "action-reaction" statement to defend moral policing last year, several fringe Hindutva groups have been emboldened and they ran a relentless communal campaign against minorities for over six months. PUCL reported 39 attacks on Christians in 2021 over alleged conversions. Starting from a ban on hijab in educational institutions, the campaign expanded to demanding a ban on azaan, halal meat, and economic boycott of Muslims.

Senior human rights advocate B.T. Venkatesh observed that while abuse of State power prevailed even under previous regimes, it was qualitatively different under the present regime. "Now, the police seem to try to please any lumpen element claiming to be following Hindutva ideology. This is dangerous," he said.

Mr. Narrain argued that Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Act, 2020, and Karnataka Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion act, 2021, violated civil liberties of individuals.

"The State is becoming increasingly authoritarian and trying to police individual choices, governed by the Constitution of India. These laws criminalise choice of food, profession, and trade. They not only curb propagation of religion, but also practising it and love between individuals," he said.

'Self-censorship' setting in: Comics

Multiple stand-up comedy shows have been cancelled so far

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The vibrant stand-up comedy scene of the city seems to be under siege as many stand-up comics confess to self-censorship setting in among them, after shows by Munawar Faruqui and Kunal Kamra were cancelled recently.

When shows of Munawar Faruqui and Kunal Kamra were cancelled in November-December 2021, it led to murmurs of 'Brand Bengaluru' taking a hit. • FILE PHOTO

When shows of the two well-known artists were cancelled in November-December 2021, it led to murmurs of "Brand Bengaluru" taking a hit. Telangana Minister K.T. Rama Rao took a dig at Bengaluru and invited them to Hyderabad and recently, Mr. Faruqui performed there, though amid protests.

City-based stand up comic Kjeld Shresth said self-censorship had indeed slowly crept in and nobody wants to crack "risky jokes". "I personally think twice about every joke I write," he said. Another stand-up comic, who did not want to be named, said any form of self-censorship will eventually make any art insipid, especially comedy. "But I can't afford to become the target of the mob and the ruling regime," he lamented. He also said he did not understand why the police were not duty bound to provide security to the show and not prejudge the show based on a petition by a fringe group and ban the show.

On multiple occasions, Hindu Janjagruti Samiti, members of which have been arrested for the murders of Gauri Lankesh and M.M. Kalburgi, have petitioned the police and got the shows cancelled.

Former State police chief S.T. Ramesh said that in an ideal condition, the police should prima facie examine the matter, and if there is no violation of any law, provide security for the show and allow the protesters at a different venue. "However, we do not function in an ideal world. We have a regime that is keen on the executive towing not just of their wishes but an ideological line. Most officers take a 'pragmatic view' and side with the ruling regime," he observed.

Mr. Shresth said he felt let down by the audience and had now started cracking jokes on the audience themselves in his shows. "One or two may take an objection to a joke. But the rest of the audience who have enjoyed that joke are not standing up for that joke or the comic. I increasingly feel neither the audience nor the stand-up comic scene cares about a few shows being cancelled," he said.

Trial of Gauri Lankesh murder case

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) filed a chargesheet against 18 accused, most members associated with Goa-based Hindutva organisations Sanatan Sanstha and Hindu Janajagruti Samiti. The accused, inspired by SS publication *Kshatra Dharma Sadhana*, considered Gauri Lankesh evil for being "anti-Hindu" and killed her, the chargesheet alleges.

Accused have been booked under Karnataka Control of Organised Crime Act, 2000 – confirmed by Supreme Court of India upon challenge by the accused

Trial in the case began on July 5, 2022 almost four years after chargesheet was filed

Deposition of most of the first responders at the murder scene completed

Justice C.M. Joshi, who began the trial promising to speed it up, elevated to the High Court of Karnataka. A new judge is yet to take charge of Special KCOCA Court

Mr. Joshi had fixed second week of every month for the trial. However, the new judge will decide on the further schedule of the trial.

PROMINENT CASES

Bidar school case
In 2020, the Bidar police filed a sedition case against teachers, parents of Shaheen school for organising a play against CAA-NRC, in which the Prime Minister was allegedly insulted. A journalist was also booked for broadcasting the clip on social media. A team led by Deputy SP Basaveshwar Heera visited the school several times and interrogated children aged between 9 and 12. They were even summoned to the police station. After the intervention of the courts, the accused got bail and the police personnel who had interrogated the children faced disciplinary action.

Journalist held for poem
Siraj Bisaralli, a TV reporter, was arrested for reading a poem against CAA-NRC in the Kannada Sahitya Sammelan at Anegundi. The poem was seen to be mocking the Prime Minister and other leaders and that it supported anti-national causes. He was released after the court heard his bail plea. The cases against him and a fellow poet Raja Baxi were filed by two BJP leaders.

Booked for sloganeering
Student-activist Amulya Leona was arrested and booked for sedition for raising "Pakistan Zindabad" slogan at an anti-CAA rally in Bengaluru. She spent over two months in jail before being released on bail. Two more student activists Ardra Narayanan in Bengaluru and another girl and organisers of an anti-CAA protest in University of Mysore were booked for sedition for carrying a "Free Kashmir" banner at the protest.

Writer of death threat letter to authors still at large

The individual has written at least 21 letters to seven writers and Oppn. leaders

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The individual who has written at least 21 threat letters to over seven writers, Opposition leaders Siddaramaiah, B.K. Hariprasad, and H.D. Kumaraswamy since March 2022 is still at large.

There is pressure from family and friends on most of us vocal writers to not make any public statements and essentially to withdraw. Some of us have succumbed to it and some of us continue to speak out. But there is also an element of self-censorship that has crept in among writers.

S.G. SIDDARAMAIAH
Senior writer

Following outrage over no action by the police, Home Minister Araga Jnanendra appointed K. Santosh Babu, SP, Ramanagaram, as nodal officer for the cases registered across the State in June. However, two months later, the police are yet to catch the letter writer. "We have some leads on the person, though we do not know his identity. We will catch him soon," a senior police officer said.

With two writers – M.M. Kalburgi and Gauri Lankesh – killed in the State, the police recovering a hitlist of nine writers from their killers, death threat letters being posted to their residences and the man still at large, it has had a chilling effect on the littérateur community. "There is immense pressure from family and friends on most of us – vocal writers – to not make any public statements and essentially to withdraw. Some of us have succumbed to it and some of us continue to speak out. But there is also an element of self-censorship that has crept in among some writers," said senior writer S.G. Siddaramaiah.

Writer Kum. Veerabhadrappa submitting a request to Vijayanagara Superintendent of Police K. Arun at the latter's office in Hosapete. • FILE PHOTO

CORRIDORS OF POWER

Without the usual josh
Contrary to the buildup given by the local Bharatya Janata Party leaders that the visit of

Prime Minister Narendra Modi (*in picture*) to Mangaluru will herald a "new era" in coastal Karnataka, Mr. Modi in his 25-minutes address at the public function on September 2 did not announce any path-breaking initiative either for the development of coastal region or for Karnataka. Visibly disinterested or exhausted, the Prime Minister did not greet the audience in the local dialect Tulu, as he does everywhere else. His speech, apparently lacking the usual josh, was focused on projects and schemes already executed by the government that were already in the public domain. Yet many people on social media complimented his address as a mature one without castigating any Opposition party/ parties.
Nevertheless, the Prime Minister compared the situation post-2014 and pre-2014 on several occasions.
While Ramanagaram district was heavily flooded during Ganesha Chaturthi and the blame was on the unscientifically executed Bengaluru-Mangaluru Expressway by the National Highway Authority of India, the Prime Minister claimed the Union government had spent over ₹70,000 crore on improvement of highways in Karnataka. With the NHAI struggling to complete the 4-lane work of Bengaluru-Mangaluru National Highway 75 between Hassan and B.C. Road with unmotorable stretch in Sakleshpur taluk since seven years, Mr. Modi announced that highway projects worth over ₹1 lakh crore were in the pipeline in Karnataka. Interestingly, Mr. Modi took the names of Karnataka Governor, Chief Minister and other Ministers on the stage, but did not mention the name of former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, who was recently inducted into BJP's Parliamentary Board, before starting his speech. Yet, the crowd cheered Mr. Yediyurappa as he appeared on the stage and whenever his name was mentioned during speeches, unlike Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai or State BJP president and Dakshina Kannada MP Nalin Kumar Kateel.

All-inclusive peace march
Shivamogga has been in the news for the past few months for all the wrong reasons such as the murder of a Hindutva activist, protests over the hijab row, and conflict over displaying a portrait of V.D. Savarkar during the Independence-Day celebrations. All these incidents seem to have dented the image of the district.

In an effort to ensure peace and lift the image of the city and the district, a group of progressive organisations took out a peace march (*in picture*) - Shantiya Kadege Namma Nadige (Our March towards Peace) on September 3.

Interestingly, the judges of the district court, Deputy Commissioner R. Selvamani and SP B.M. Laxmi Prasad extended their support to this. The event received an overwhelming response.

Hundreds of people took part in the march, which was led by Hindu seers, moulvis and Christian priests. Senior judges of the district court also took part in the march for half an hour and left for their court proceedings by 11 a.m. They also took part in the programme where a vehicle designed to spread the message of love and harmony was flagged off two days ago.

However, this effort did not go down well with the political heads of the ruling government, who often criticise people associated with progressive organisations. The organisers wondered why did the BJP opposed the march meant to spread peace and harmony.

ANIL KUMAR SASTRY
SATHISH G.T.

Murugha seer taken to mutt for *mahazar*

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BELAGAVI

Seer of Murugha Rajendra Brihan Mutt Shivamurthy Murugha Sharanaru, who has been accused of sexually abusing minor girls, was brought to the mutt in Chitradurga by the police on Sunday for conducting a mahazar.

The seer, who is in police custody after a case under POSCO Act was registered against him, was accompanied by investigators and local witnesses when the *mahazar* was conducted. An officer of the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police was present, the police said. They accompanied the seer to his quarters in the mutt and the girls hostel.

The seer was taken back to the Deputy Superintendent of Police office for further questioning later.

Meanwhile, BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil R. Yatnal has urged the seer to abdicate his seat in the wake of charges levelled against him.

MANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka undertaking)
O & M Circle, Shivamogga - 577201
Ph: 08182 - 08182-225544 CIN: U40109 KA 2002 SGC 030425

Corrigendum to Tender Notification

SEE/EE(O)/AEE(O)/22-23/7577-83 Date:17.08.2022

Corrigendum is hereby issued to the tender notification published on 24.08.2022 for providing Lorry/truck service is hereunder.

In the category column of Sl.No.2 (Shimoga Divisional Store) and Sl.No.4 (Sagar Rural Subdivision) shall be read as 'General' instead of ST and SC respectively.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Elecl), O&M Circle Shimoga

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PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client M/s. HINDUSTAN PETROLEUM CORPORATION LIMITED (Public Sector Enterprise) a Company incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956 and having its Registered Office at Petroleum House, 17, Jamshedji Tata Road, Mumbai - 400 020 and having its Regional Office at No. 77, Old Madras Road, Dooravaninagar Post, KR Puram, Bengaluru-560016 represented by its Deputy General Manager and Duly Constituted Attorney intends to obtain lease-hold rights over the property more fully described in the schedule hereunder, to run and operate a petroleum retail outlet, from the following Applicant/s : **Mr. Puttaswamy s/o Thimma Bhovi**, has got the legal, clear title in respect of the property Old Sy No 16/B, new Sy No, 16/1/2 situated at Hosahalli Village, & B G Pura hobli, Malavalli taluk, Mandya district, situated on NH 209, village Hosahalli, who claims/ represents to be the absolute owner and having absolute marketable and clear title and marketable right and title over the schedule property.

Details of the Schedule Property

All that piece and parcel of the property bearing old Sy No 16/B, new Sy No, 16/1/2 situated at Hosahalli village, B.G. Pura Hobli, Malavalli taluk, Mandya district, measuring to the extent of 01 Acre 00 Guntas boundad on: East by : property belongs to LS No 18, West by : property B2, North by : Road, South by : property belongs to LS No 18.

With regards to the above mentioned properties, if any person/s, financial institutions/firm or predecessor/s-in-title, Govt, authorities/bodies, Banks/co-operative societies, having any manner of right, interest or title over the schedule property or any portion thereof, having any claim against or into or upon the said property or any port thereof by way of tenancy, inheritance, mortgage, transfer, sale, gift, lease, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, attachment or otherwise howsoever, are hereby required to make the same known in writing to us at our office within 30 days from this publication, after which it would be construed that there is no objection whatsoever from any one and the said transaction would be completed.

Address for communication is as follows: **Aravinda S N, Advocate**, Iconet Business Center, No 91, Temple Road, Near 10th Cross, Yallappa Garden, Malleshwaram, Bangalore-560003.

E-mail : advocate3536@gmail.com
advocateoffice3536@gmail.com

MANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka undertaking)
Corporate Office, "MESCOM BHAVANA", Bejai, Mangaluru - 575 004
Ph: 0824-2885795 CIN: U40109 KA 2002 SGC 030425

No. MESCOM-PROC0PURC/102/2022-PROC Date: 02.09.2022

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-Procurement Portal Only)

MESCOM invites short term tender for Manufacture and Supply of following material.

Tender No	Name of the Material proposed for Procurement	Quantity
MESCOM/2022-23/IND831/CALL-2	11KV Horizontal Crossarms-MS	40,000 Nos

The interested eligible bidders may log on to : www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in on or after 05.09.2022.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Ele.) (Proc.), Corporate Office

For Power Related Complaints & Assistance Call Toll Free Number 1912

TUNGABHADRA BOARD: TB DAM

e-Procurement Short Term Tender Notice
IFB Nos.82/2022-23 to 91/2022-23 Dt.03.09.2022

Tender for total 10 Nos. of Works are invited in respect of HW & HLC Division, TB Dam through 'e-Procurement'.

Bid Document downloading Start Date & Time:	05.09.2022 at 11.00 AM
Bid Document downloading End Date & Time :	12.09.2022 at 3.00 PM
Bid Submission End Date & Time :	12.09.2022 at 5.30 PM
Date of opening of Commercial Stage (For IFB Nos.82 to 85):	13.09.2022 at 11.00 AM
Date of opening of PQ Stage: (For IFB Nos.86 to 91)	13.09.2022 at 11.00 AM
Date of opening of Commercial Stage (For IFB Nos.86 to 90):	15.09.2022 at 11.00 AM
Date of opening of Commercial Stage* (For IFB Nos.91/2022-23)	15.09.2022 at 11.00 AM
Date of opening of TQ Stage (For IFB Nos.91/2022-23)	15.09.2022 at 3.00 PM

Further details can be seen @ https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in
*Commencement of Reverse Tendering

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I.B, TB Board, TB Dam

Ph: 08394 - 259114
Fax : 08394 - 259167

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No.:908/BGK/Tr(W&M)SEE/EE(O)/AEE-1/F-53/3380-88 Date: 02.09.2022

TENDER NOTIFICATION (e-Procurement mode only)

Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited invites tender for "Design, Manufacture, Supply, Erection including Testing and Commissioning the following works on **TTK Basis.**

1. Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/BGK/SEE/22-23/CAP_BANK/SHIROL for providing 12.1kV, 2.9MVAR Capacitor Bank for 11kV Bank-III at **110kV Sub-station** Shirol in Mudhol Taluk Bagalkot District coming under jurisdiction TL&SSM Division, KPTCL, Bagalkot.

2. Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/BGK/SEE/22-23/CAP_BANK/VJMT for providing 12.1kV, 2.9MVAR Capacitor Bank for 11kV Bank at **220kV R/s Vajjaramatti** in Mudhol Taluk, Bagalkot District coming under jurisdiction TL&SSM Division, KPTCL, Bagalkot.

3. Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/BGK/SEE/22-23/CAP_BANK/SAVALAGI for providing 12.1kV, 2.9MVAR Capacitor Bank for 11kV Bank-III at **110kV Sub-station Savalagi** in Jamakhandi Taluk, Bagalkot District coming under jurisdiction TL&SSM Division, KPTCL, Bagalkot.

4. Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/BGK/SEE/22-23/CAP_BANK/UTTUR for providing 12.1kV, 2.9MVAR Capacitor Bank for 11kV Bank-II at **110kV Sub-station Uttur** in Mudhol Taluk, Bagalkot District coming under jurisdiction TL&SSM Division, KPTCL, Bagalkot.

5. Bid Enquiry No: KPTCL/BGK/SEE/22-23/CAP_BANK/RANBLGLI for providing 12.1kV, 2.9MVAR Capacitor Bank for 11kV Bank-III at **110kV Sub-station Ranna Belagali** in Mudhol Taluk, Bagalkot District coming under jurisdiction TL&SSM Division, KPTCL, Bagalkot.

The bids will be received through e-procurement mode only.The detailed notification regarding the subject enquiry in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** on hyperlink **"e-Procurement-KPTCL"** or directly logging on to website **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **05.09.2022.**

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Elecl.)
Transmission (W&M) Circle, KPTCL,
Sector No.45, Navanagara, Bagalakote-587103

IN BRIEF

TTD to contest court order to pay devotee

TIRUMALA

Aggrieved by the orders passed by a consumer court in Salem directing it to either facilitate Vastralankara seva or pay a compensation of ₹45 lakh to a devotee, the TTD has decided to go for an appeal in the higher court. A devotee Hari Bhaskar booked a Vastralankara seva ticket online by tendering ₹12,250 on June 27, 2006 and was granted a ticket to attend the seva. However, the TTD had cancelled all arjitha sevas due to the outbreak of COVID-19.

YSRCP, TDP obstructing industrial projects: BJP

VIJAYAWADA

BJP State general secretary S. Vishnuvardhan Reddy alleged that the ruling YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) and the TDP were obstructing industrial projects in Andhra Pradesh to achieve their political ends. Hence entrepreneurs were reluctant to invest in the State and many existing industries had either moved to other States or were facing closure. Addressing the media here on Sunday, he cited the case of the bulk drug park in East Godavari district, which had not taken off.

Tribal farmer kills leopard with knife

IDUKKI

A farmer allegedly killed a leopard with a knife when it attacked him while he was working in his farm in a village near the Kerala-Tamil Nadu border in Idukki district on Saturday. According to reports, Gopalan, 42, a tribal, lives in Chikkanamkudi village, in Idukki district. A leopard reportedly attacked him from behind. He then took a knife kept in his possession and attacked the animal on its head. The animal died on the spot.

Heavy rain continues to wreak havoc in parts of Bengaluru

Two complaints of tree-fall received; traffic snarls reported in CBD area

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Heavy rains continued to wreak havoc with parts of Bengaluru receiving continuous downpour on Sunday evening, leading to traffic snarls.

The control room of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) also received two complaints of trees falling in the city. A control room officer said that a tree was uprooted at Adugodi, Koramangala, and another got uprooted in Devara Jeevanahalli, but no damage was reported.

A flooded road following heavy rainfall in Bengaluru on Sunday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Traffic snarls were reported in the central business district area, Mysuru Road, Bannerghatta Road, Tumakuru Road, Hebbal, K.R. Puram, Bellandur, J.P. Nagar, Silk Board junction, BTM Layout, Rajajinagar, Indiranagar, and Koramangala, according to the traffic police.

The official car of P. Krishnakant, DCP of Bengaluru's South division, was damaged near South End Circle after a branch fell on it. No one was hurt in the incident.

Meanwhile, plans for the immersion of Ganesha idols were affected owing to the rain.

Flooding on roads was reported in various parts of the city, including K.R. Market, Silk Board junction, Outer Ring Road near Ecospace in Bellandur, and HSR Layout.

Residents of low-lying areas may have to be on a high alert as the India Meteorological Department has forecast widespread rains over the next two days.

"Generally cloudy sky. Few spells of light to moderate rain/thundershowers very likely. Maximum and minimum temperatures are very likely to be around 30 and 20 degrees Celsius respectively for next 48 hours," IMD said in a statement.

At 11 p.m. on Sunday, the highest quantum of rainfall (44mm) was recorded at C.V. Raman Nagar in East Bengaluru, according to the KSNDMC website, and 21.21 mm of rain was recorded in Bengaluru Urban.

Nehru trophy hat-trick for boat club

STAFF REPORTER
ALAPPUZHA

In an atmosphere filled with fun, cheer and sheer elation, *Mahadevikadu Kattil Thekkethil Chundan* (snakeboat) rowed by members of the Pallathuruthy Boat Club (PBC) won the 68th edition of the Nehru Trophy Boat Race (NTBR) held on Punnamada Lake here on Sunday.

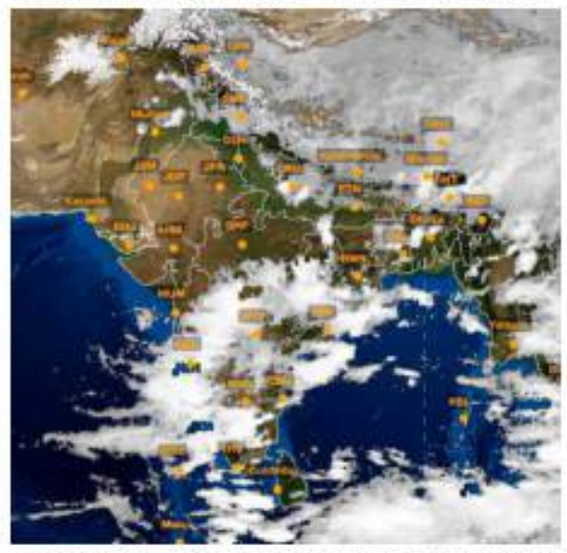
The PBC, captained by Santhosh Chakko, emerged victorious in a nail-biting finish, clocking 4.30.77 minutes. With this, the club completed a hat-trick of Nehru trophy titles named after the first Prime Minister of India. They lifted the trophy in 2018 and 2019 rowing *Payippadan Chundan* and *Nadubhagom Chundan* respectively. It is the maiden Nehru trophy for the *Mahadevikadu Kattil Thekkethil Chundan*.

Nadubhagom Chundan rowed by the NCDC Boat Club Kumarakom finished second. *Veeyapuram Chundan* (Punnamada Boat Club) and *Champakulam Chundan* (Police Boat Club, Alappuzha) finished in third and fourth places. The Nehru Trophy was also the first race of the second edition of the Champions Boat League (CBL). Both the NTBR and CBL are held after a pandemic-induced gap of two years.

A total of 77 boats participated under nine categories in the NTBR. The event commenced with a race of smaller boats in the forenoon. The excitement was exemplified by the tens of thousands of people who turned up to witness the event dubbed as 'Olympics on water'. The decibel levels reached a crescendo when the much-anticipated heats of snakeboat competition began.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy rainfall at isolated places likely over Himachal Pradesh, East Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gangetic West Bengal, Odisha, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizora, Tripura, Telangana, Rayalaseema, South Interior Karnataka, Kerala, Mahe, Lakshadweep, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	91.0	29.5	24.1	Kozhikode	–	32.6	25.0
Ahmedabad	–	35.6	26.5	Kurnool	–	34.6	25.9
Aizawl	0.2	–	21.8	Lucknow	–	36.0	26.3
Allahabad	–	35.0	25.6	Madurai	–	35.7	25.1
Bengaluru	41.0	30.0	20.4	Mangaluru	–	30.6	24.1
Bhopal	–	33.5	25.1	Mumbai	8.0	32.6	26.5
Bhubaneswar	–	36.6	25.5	Mysuru	–	31.2	21.0
Chandigarh	–	33.0	25.7	New Delhi	–	37.1	26.4
Chennai	–	35.3	26.3	Patna	14.0	35.0	26.0
Coimbatore	–	33.4	23.2	Port Blair	–	31.7	25.8
Dehradun	5.0	31.5	23.3	Puducherry	–	32.4	25.4
Gangtok	0.2	21.2	16.4	Pune	–	34.0	23.9
Goa	–	30.5	24.5	Raipur	2.0	33.4	24.2
Guwahati	8.0	33.8	26.0	Ranchi	6.0	32.4	22.4
Hubballi	–	30.0	22.0	Shillong	15.0	24.8	17.5
Hyderabad	–	34.0	23.3	Shimla	7.4	25.2	15.0
Imphal	0.8	29.5	20.7	Srinagar	–	30.4	18.4
Jaipur	–	35.3	25.6	Thiruvananthapuram	13.0	31.2	24.1
Kochi	23.0	30.0	24.2	Tiruchi	–	34.7	25.5
Kohima	–	–	16.8	Vijayawada	–	34.4	27.6
Kolkata	–	34.5	27.6	Visakhapatnam	–	34.8	28.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	–	13	.44	53	56	
Bengaluru	7	38	.46	36	78	
Chennai	3	29	.93	44	41	
Delhi	–	–	–	88	335	
Hyderabad	10	8	122	32	57	
Kolkata	9	15	.23	67	83	
Lucknow	32	50	.78	49	79	
Mumbai	10	–	109	69	75	
Pune	–	33	.82	–	–	
Visakhapatnam	–	43	.16	50	–	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ballabgarh, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 147 indicating a moderate level of pollution. In contrast, Davanagere, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 9

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Boy dies of poisoning; classmate's mother held

She was jealous of his schoolwork, say police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KARAIKAL

A mother of a Class 8 student allegedly poisoned her daughter's classmate to death at a school in Karaikal in Puducherry, unable to bear with his better all-round performance.

Sahayarani Victoria was arrested on murder charges and remanded in judicial custody on Sunday. The police said she was jealous of the academic excellence of Bala Manikandan, 13, and his active participation in cultural events. She was reported to have hoodwinked the school watchman on Friday into believing that she was delivering soft drinks to the boy at the bidding of his relatives while the students were practising on the campus for the annual day function.

After consuming the spiked cool drinks, the boy developed nausea at home. His parents checked with the school authorities and learnt from the watchman that the boy had already developed discomfort while at school after consuming the drinks. Thereafter, CCTV footage was analysed and the identity of Sahayarani was established.

On Saturday night and Sunday morning, the boy's relatives and well-wishers staged a protest in front of the hospital

Subsequently, the boy's parents filed a police complaint and admitted him to the Karaikal Government Hospital. However, he did not respond to treatment and died late on Saturday night. The police then arrested the woman.

On Saturday night and Sunday morning, the boy's relatives and well-wishers staged a protest in front of the hospital, alleging lapses in treatment. They argued that the boy was not shifted from the general ward to the Intensive Care Unit for a lengthy period. They were also upset at the alleged delay on the part of the police in taking action.

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Look to the future

On Teachers' Day, an educator examines the changes that have taken place in the field and what we need to do to make teaching-learning purposeful and engaging

Former U.S. President Obama once said that the currency for the 21st century will be education and innovation. Dr. R.A. Mashelkar, former DG-CSIR, went further by saying that what we need most now is education in innovation and innovation in education. And, India needs it the most.

Dramatic changes

The two years of the pandemic has led to a drastic change among the student demography, which would have otherwise normally occurred over the span of a decade. In addition, the socio-cultural changes around the world have also augmented the change in the way students think, learn and value things. Consequently, the changes that the academic sectors have to navigate pose a huge challenge. This includes the need for reorientation among the professors in empathising with students and engaging them without judgement but with a clear action plan to normalise the academic climate. The new normal solicits a specific capacity building among the faculty to navigate the normalisation of the academic climate.

According to recent industry reports, India's online education market is poised to grow by $2.28 billion between 2021-2025, at a CAGR of 20%. Consequently, it suggests that the stakeholders are already on the verge of readily adopting reshaped pedagogy and redesigned curriculum for the new dispensation. Are higher education institutes (HEIS) equipped to handle this change to create engaging online modules to appeal to this generation?

Outcome-based attendance

We expect students to be confined within four walls and listen to the conventional instructions as part of the teaching and learning. Irrespective of whether the lectures lead to concept progression among the students, their physical presence is marked as attendance. Specifically, the need is to define attendance by liberating it from time and space and considering it in terms of learning outcome intended for every hour by designing an appropriate formative assessment as metrics. Outcome-based attendance would be meaningful, engaging and liberating since the blended learning or flexible scheduling or hybrid flexible (HyFlex) as modus operandi and culture is emerging to be the new order and Online Distance Learning (ODL) is likely to be legitimised in collegiate education.

The next aspect that bothers institutions is the inability of the present generation of students to handle information overload from social media. Among students, the processing of information acquired through the context or content would typically happen through the progressive organic maturity acquired through social learning and life experiences including extracurricular activities in the college or school, friendships made during their education, and leadership skills learnt by being involved in organising cultural and co-curricular activities. If the information processing does not happen through adequate social learning, it may lead to a cognitive overload among students. Subsequently, this may lead to difficulty in comprehending an issue and making effective decisions. Consequently, the inability to assimilate the information as personality traits would render students to be puffed up with pseudo-cognition thus triggering them to make hasty decisions, ignoring the prerequisite for negotiation and coping skills, social skills including people skills as part of life. Reports have shown that, in the post pandemic, emotional intelligence seems to be missing among students.

Period of transition

On the one hand, we are in a rat race for organisational accreditation or ranking and the operation appears to be successful. It is not clear whether ranking or accrediting agencies are really concerned about these aspects to adjudicate the mental health index of students or offer a clear provision to incentivise such measures administered by the colleges as part of their assessment.

Students, teachers and learning itself have transformed. Learning tools too have evolved accordingly. The ways of thinking and working and tools for working have also undergone a dramatic change. Teachers today have to realise these aspects, as this is a period of transition. Teachers need to liberate themselves from the past and think along with the present generation to render the teaching-learning process pleasurable.

The writer is the Principal and Secretary of Madras Christian College.
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Coercion as conversion

Sexual orientation and gender identities do not require medical intervention

In a significant and welcome move, another layer of discrimination against the LGBTQIA+ community is being removed with the National Medical Commission (NMC) declaring conversion therapy a "professional misconduct" and empowering State Medical Councils to take disciplinary action if the guideline is breached. Members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual or of any other orientation are often subjected to conversion or 'reparative' therapy, particularly when they are young, to change their sexual orientation or gender identity by force. The therapy can mean anything from psychiatric treatment, use of psychosomatic drugs, electroshock therapy, exorcism and violence. This can lead to trauma, manifesting in depression, anxiety, drug use, and even suicide. The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry contends that the interventions offered in conversion therapy are provided under the "false premise that homosexuality and gender diverse identities are pathological". The "absence of pathology" means there is no need for conversion or any other like intervention. To drive this point home, it is clear that an all-out effort will be required. In his landmark June 2021 judgment, Justice N. Anand Venkatesh of the Madras High Court had said pending adequate legislation, he was issuing guidelines for the police, social welfare ministries of the State and Centre, and the medical council for the protection of the community. The court sought updates from stakeholders every few months.

The NMC's August 25 letter to State Medical Councils states that the Madras High Court had directed it to issue an official notification listing conversion therapy as a wrong, under the Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002. If the Supreme Court's decriminalising of homosexuality in 2018 by striking down Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code was a first step, the NMC's notice is also a small move towards inclusivity. To make the LGBTQAI+ community feel safer, however, a lot more will have to be done. Taking the cue from countries such as Canada, which has banned conversion therapy, there should be clarity on what action will be taken against quacks, psychiatrists and doctors accused of offering reparative treatment and the punishment they will face. The groundwork has to be laid in education. Medical textbooks prescribed in 2018 still consider lesbianism a "perversion", an act of "mental degenerates". The change has to take place at a societal level, and complemented by laws better tuned to the needs of a diverse community than the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, has sought to do. To that effect, Indian institutions and society have a long road ahead. First, they will have to acknowledge the "variability of human beings" and accord equal respect to every one, whatever the sexual orientation or gender identity.

Perils of brinksmanship

India will need to assess the security implications of another Taiwan Strait crisis

The shooting down of a Chinese drone by Taiwan's military on September 1 has marked a new phase in the already simmering tensions across the Taiwan Strait, highlighting the growing risks of escalation, even if unintended. Over recent weeks, China's military has carried out unprecedented military drills surrounding Taiwan, following the visit last month of U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Some manoeuvres crossed the median of the Taiwan Strait and were declared by China's military to have also taken place in territorial waters claimed by Taiwan. Taiwan soberly chose not to engage the PLA vessels. In the wake of the drills, the Chinese military has subsequently sought to continue asserting Beijing's territorial claims by sending drones into Taiwan's airspace. Photographs taken up close of Taiwan military personnel were subsequently shared on social media, apparently to demonstrate Beijing's capabilities, but in the process raising pressure on Taipei to show a response. Taiwan's military said it took the decision to shoot down what it called an unidentified civilian drone over its airspace in Shiyu Island after delivering several warnings. Shooting down a military drone may have elicited a different response from China, which has so far played down the incident. While the Chinese military reportedly has been deploying both military and civilian-use drones, so have ordinary residents in Fujian right across the strait, raising the risks of miscalculation triggering a serious incident.

The deployment of drones has added a further layer of unpredictability to an already tense situation. The past month's developments have certainly served a reminder to the region of the fragility of the current status quo, and particularly of China's willingness to change it. While most observers expect that a Chinese invasion remains too risky a prospect for the Communist Party leadership in the immediate future, an unintended escalation no longer remains a remote possibility. Most countries, including India, have preferred to stay out of the Taiwan issue, considering the One China Policy and the needs of the complicated relations with China. But sooner rather than later, they will need to assess the implications to their own security interests of a serious crisis. Taiwan's status as a lynchpin in the global semiconductor industry is a case in point. While India's recent reference to the "militarisation" of the strait is not a reflection of a major change in its approach, New Delhi has appeared to show greater willingness to do more with Taiwan particularly in the economic realm, such as setting up an alternative base for semi-conductor manufacturing in India. These are, even if long overdue, steps in the right direction.

Justice rendered, but only incompletely

In the Teesta Setalvad case, the lack of clear judicial answers to the top court's compelling questions are conspicuous

KALEESWARAM RAJ

Last Friday, a Bench of the Supreme Court of India led by the Chief Justice of India, Justice U.U. Lalit, granted interim bail to human rights activist Teesta Setalvad who was arrested in June this year. She has now walked out of jail. The order is, without doubt, a great relief to Ms. Setalvad personally, and to the country's liberty jurisprudence at large. The Court, in the instant case, has directly confronted a politically vindicative executive and performed its role. Yet, the order calls for critical discourse.

Needed, answers

Rather than the solution of interim bail that the Court has rightly provided to the activist, it is the set of questions that it has posed which requires the attention of all concerned, especially those at the helm of affairs. During the hearing, the judges underlined four "features" of the case that "bothered" the Court. They are: omission in filing the charge sheet even after two months of Ms. Setalvad's arrest; registration of the First Information Report (FIR) on the very next day of the Supreme Court's judgment that dismissed Zakia Jafri's plea against exoneration of Narendra Modi and others in the 2002 Gujarat riots, with strictures against Ms. Setalvad and others; the long adjournment of the bail plea by the High Court (from August 3 to a date after September 19); lack of allegations regarding commission of any offence serious enough to deny bail.

These issues, which the Court posed, would travel well beyond Ms. Setalvad's case. The Court's pointed questions have clearly exposed the malice in the State's action. More importantly, the same questions remain equally relevant and compelling in hundreds of cases across the country, with an important supplement – that, in many of them, draconian provisions have also been recklessly invoked, to victimise the dissidents.

The sad part of the top court's order, however, is that the rigour of these questions and the enthusiasm to get clear judicial answers are conspicuously lacking in the final order. The questions on the features of the case were asked by the Court openly on Thursday, September 1, 2022, and after a day's adjournment, the matter was heard further and the order pronounced on Friday.

Friday's order, after noting the long custody of the appellant lady and the opportunity availed by the police officers for custodial interrogation, said that the petitioner had made out a case for "the relief of interim bail, till the matter was considered by the High Court". The Court said: "We are therefore not considering whether the appellant be released on regular bail or not. That issue will be gone into by the High Court." The Court also made an unwarranted clarification that the present order "shall not be taken to be a reflection on merits and shall not be used by the other accused".

Lost opportunity

When the fundamental questions which the Court posed on the previous day remained relevant, the Supreme Court, as the guardian of the Constitution, should have and could have done better by answering them and granted regular bail to Ms. Setalvad, by which a useful precedent would have been set for the other accused (who are almost

identically situated) in the case as well. Viewed in this way, the order is disappointing.

The questions by the Court are directed against the Gujarat High Court too. Adjournment of regular bail applications for an indefinite period occurs in many High Courts. This is an issue that should have been taken up seriously by the top court. In the very same context, the Court ought to have also held that when such an indefinite delay happens, that by itself is a reason for an appeal before the Supreme Court under Article 136 of the Constitution.

The Solicitor General had raised a contention on the maintainability of Ms. Setalvad's appeal based on the doctrine of elections, suggesting thereby that the petitioner having moved the High Court, should have waited for the High Court's final decision. This could have been easily rejected by the top court on the ground of a gross violation of fundamental rights. In a scenario where the High Courts take several weeks or even months together in deciding a bail plea, the Supreme Court should have deprecated such practice. Ms. Setalvad's case was a classic one where the delay in taking the decision itself amounted to an adverse decision warranting intervention by the top court. It is curious to note that the Centre relied on the principles of 'rule of law' and 'equality before the law' at the Supreme Court, to detain the activist. This terrible irony required a judicial admonition, which too, unfortunately, did not occur.

On June 24, a Bench led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar, quite unfairly and without materials, blamed Ms. Setalvad and others for showing "the audacity to question the integrity of every functionary" associated with the investigation. In the context of the long litigation for rendering justice to the Gujarat riot victims, Ms. Setalvad and others were accused of "keeping the pot boiling". Without any convincing reason, the Bench also said that "all those involved in such abuse of process, need to be in the dock and proceeded with in accordance with law". This deplorable approach, which was palpably erroneous and unjust, was the basis for the high-handed action against Ms. Setalvad and others. In view of this, the trial court as well as the High Court might have turned reluctant to grant bail to the accused. This is all the more the reason why the Supreme Court, as an institution, should have invoked its introspective jurisdiction to grant regular bail to Ms. Setalvad, which unfortunately did not happen.

A delay that is serious

A long delay in deciding the bail plea is a serious issue. The country's judiciary has been infected with this pathological condition for quite a long time, because of which hundreds of political prisoners languish in jails even now. The predicament of Father Stan Swamy who died while in judicial custody and many others, from Siddique Kappan to Umar Khalid to Gautam Navlakha, who are repeatedly denied bail and stay in prison, has put the judiciary also under trial. Thus, Ms. Setalvad's case was an opportunity for the Court to evaluate the state of freedom in the country. It offered a litmus test. It was an occasion for a formidable judicial reprimand to the political executive, and to the judiciary itself, that has failed the people during tough times. It is, clearly, an opportunity missed.

Stronger intervention missed

In the celebrated judgment in *Gudikanti Narasimhulu* (1977), Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer wrote: "The issue of 'Bail or Jail' -at the pretrial or post-conviction stage-although largely hinging on judicial discretion, is one of liberty, justice, public safety and burden of the public treasury, all of which insist that a developed jurisprudence of bail is integral to a socially sensitized judicial process." These prophetic words had resonance in *Joginder Kumar vs State of U.P.* (1994), where the Court ordered procedural imperatives for arrest. In *Sanjay Chandra vs CBI* (2011), the Court put the issue in perspective: "The object of bail is neither punitive nor preventative". It is only to "secure the appearance of the accused". The judgment in *Arnesh Kumar vs State Of Bihar & Anr.* (2014), relying on the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code and the Law Commission reports, warned against arbitrary arrests and detention. Even recently, in *Satender Kumar Antil vs Central Bureau Of Investigation* (2022) ,while urging for a Bail Act in India, the Supreme Court said that the ideas of democracy and the Police state are conceptually opposite to each other.

It is the Court's own judicial philosophy on bail that makes the order in Ms. Setalvad's case inadequate. The case deserved a better and stronger intervention. True, justice was rendered. But only incompletely.

Kaleeswaram Raj is a lawyer at the Supreme Court of India

India and Australia, from divergence to convergence

The fifth round of the bilateral Track 1.5 dialogue will set the pace for Canberra's deepening relationship with New Delhi

AMITABH MATTOO & LISA SINGH

In August 1950, one of Australia's most celebrated jurists, Sir Owen Dixon (who sought to mediate a settlement on Kashmir) wrote to his daughter, Anne, in Melbourne that Delhi was "a place I hope and trust that I shall never again see". More than 70 years later, as distinguished thought leaders from India and Australia meet in New Delhi (September 6) for the fifth round of the most important bilateral Track 1.5 dialogue, it is widely recognised that Canberra's relationship with New Delhi is among the most important and critical for the future of the Indo-Pacific. The leaders at the dialogue will reflect on the past, but recommend more concrete steps to foster the relationship and ways to create a more habitable and sustainable planet.

A gradual change

When we started this dialogue we recognised that for most of the 20th century, India and Australia rarely had a meaningful conversation. The long shadow of the Cold War, India's autarkic economic policies, the White Australia policy, and Canberra's decision not to transfer uranium to India and other factors had kept the two countries apart for several decades. We used to celebrate each other's problems rather than our successes. But that era of mutual schadenfreude is well and truly over.

Today, few countries in the Indo-Pacific region have more in common in both values and interests than India and Australia. Apart from being two English-speaking, multicultural, federal democracies that believe in and respect the rule of law, both have a strategic interest in ensuring a balance in the Indo-Pacific and in ensuring that the region is not dominated by any one hegemonic power. In addition, Indians are today the largest source of skilled migrants in Australia and the economic relationship, already robust, could potentially be transformed if the promise of the new Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) is realised.

Setting markers for ties

A dialogue is a conversation between equals who have agreed to work as partners. No one just preaches, no one just listens. Thought leaders have come here, some from long distances, to have a robust conversation about our relationship and ways in which we can carry it forward. We are here also to lead and provide markers for the future of the relationship between our two great countries.

We are living through a period of immense turbulence, disruption and even subversion: the world is more uncertain than it ever was in our lifetimes. Even the Cold War, some may say, had a predictability, icy as it may have been.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

The Australia-India Leadership Dialogue is critical because ideas matter in a relationship as much transactions and negotiations do. Stable, strong and sustainable relationships are built not just on the possibility of immediate gains, but on the promise of the future. In other words, the relationship is far too important to be left to the two governments alone. Governments matter tremendously, but forums such as these can provide the space and the ambience that can infuse new ideas to generate a new energy into the relationship.

Seeds that will germinate

The Leadership Dialogue is also important because ultimately, people and real connections matter. Technology and the cyberworld can blind us into believing that face-to-face conversations are outdated. We, in this Leadership Dialogue, still believe in the power of personal communication and collective communication in a shared physical space.

In her definitive account of India-Australia bilateral relations, historian Meg Gurry relates how Arthur Tange, High Commissioner to India and one of Australia's most formidable diplomats, wrote in 1965 to his Foreign Minister, Paul Hasluck, that there was fertile ground between the two countries, but "no one seems to know what seeds to plant". Nearly 60 years on, there are not only many seeds waiting to be planted, but much ripe fruit ready to harvest. And that is why we are here.

Some of those seeds will germinate during this important dialogue through discussion, from a broad range of business executives, government officials and scholars, eager to increase their understanding about how each country approaches shared challenges. From cyberthreats and artificial intelligence (AI) governance in a geopolitically turbulent region, to how they will decarbonise their economies and help each other develop trusted supply chains through critical minerals cooperation, to how India's tech talent can help address Australia's skills gaps through migration.

As the premier forum for informal diplomacy between Australia and India, backed by Australian-founded tech company Atlassian and its co-founder Mike Cannon-Brookes, outcomes that grow the relationship through emerging technology are high on the agenda.

Australia wants to find alternative markets to China and diversify supply chains for its critical minerals. As a country with reserves of about 21 out of the 49 minerals identified in India's critical minerals strategy, Australia is well placed to serve India's national interests required for India's carbon reduction programme.

A shared framework

And while this is the first Dialogue since 2019, due to the novel coronavirus pandemic having kept both countries apart, as two nations we have only grown closer together through enhancing our shared framework for regional security, promoting business and commercial opportunities and strengthening our people to people links, bilaterally and multilaterally.

As India marks 75 years of Independence and surpasses the United Kingdom as the fifth largest global economy, the momentum around this fifth Australia-India Leaderships Dialogue and the bilateral fruit it may bear should not be underestimated.

Amitabh Mattoo is Professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University, Honorary Professor, University of Melbourne, and founding CEO of the Australia India Institute. Lisa Singh is CEO, Australia India Institute, former Australian Senator and the first woman of Indian heritage to be elected to the Australian Parliament

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

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INS *Vikrant*

Compliments to Cochin Shipyard Ltd. for having worked right from the year 2009 till the commissioning of the engineering marvel, INS *Vikrant*. Given the maritime security imperatives, the commissioning of the aircraft carrier assumes great significance. It is also exhilarating that the Indian Navy now gets a new ensign.

G. RAMASUBRAMANYAM,
Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh

■ The induction of India's first indigenous aircraft carrier is a defining moment. It is a matter of pride that India also joins a select group of nations having the capability to build an aircraft carrier. September 2 is a memorable day and marks the strengthening of India's maritime force.

P. VICTOR SELVARAJ,
Palayamkottai, Tamil Nadu

■ Governments, more than a particular government, need to to be thanked for making INS *Vikrant* become a reality, after much planning and designing. There can be no appropriation of credit here. We should also thank all the engineers, architects, planners and designers – the complete team. Without the incredible assistance and help of the last-level workers, the dream would not have come true.

BIDYUT KUMAR CHATTERJEE,
Faridabad, Haryana

■ Even on the occasion such as the commissioning of the country's first indigenous aircraft carrier, it is unfortunate that politics has entered the equation. Casting narrow political considerations aside, there must be gracious acknowledgement of political visionaries and our various defence establishments in making India progressively self-reliant in defence.

S.K. CHOUDHURY,
Bengaluru

Nano urea and trials

There is no doubt that the new fertilizer product, 'nano urea', is a critical advancement in the area of fertilizers (Page 1, "Nano urea fast-tracked for approval despite incomplete trials", September 4). But there is no pressing case for releasing it for use by farmers without completing all scientifically mandatory field trials. When the first two trials revealed that the increase in yields on application of nano urea was insignificant, the fast-tracking of approval without completion of the required field trials is incomprehensible. Who knows what fresh insights agricultural scientists might have gained during the waived third trial?

KOSARAJU CHANDRAMOULI,
Hyderabad

Interim bail

When the judiciary has made it very clear that 'bail is the rule, jail an exception', it is unfortunate that Gujarat had asked the top court to see to it that Teesta Setalvad was not to be given 'special treatment'. This best exemplifies what happens in a majority of cases – when those responsible take the law into their own hands and give a go-by to the principles of fairness and justice.

PRABHU RAJ R.,
Bengaluru

■ What an irony it is that those who committed grievous crimes either go unpunished or get mild punishment (in this context, the recent remission of 11 rape and murder convicts comes to mind), whereas those who take up cudgels on behalf of victims and seek justice are condemned as conspirators and criminals and made to undergo a lot of suffering. It is the moral obligation of civil society to extend its support to activists who side with the vulnerable.

G. DAVID MILTON,
Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

Sayonara Serena

With a record number of accomplishments to her credit secured by way of convincing and authoritative victories over her opponents, Serena Williams strode the tennis arena like a colossus ('Sport' page, September 4).
The legend will be long remembered for her stellar and power-packed performances and her unique style of victory celebrations which enthralled and entertained audiences across the world. She was truly a role-model. Her will to succeed and never-say-die attitude need to be emulated by younger players of the game.

B. SURESH KUMAR,
Coimbatore

A lot is at stake for India-Bangladesh ties

While they have deepened ties, the Hasina and Modi governments have failed to resolve long-standing issues

SYED MUNIR KHASRU

PTI

In August, while addressing devotees gathered to celebrate Janmashtami, Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abdul Momen requested the Indian government to ensure that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina stays in power when Bangladesh goes to the polls next year. He claimed that both India and Bangladesh would gain political stability by ensuring this. These out-of-the-norm comments from the senior cabinet member created a stir on both sides of the border. Senior leaders of the ruling Awami League distanced themselves from these remarks, while India maintained silence. Mr. Momen's comments came before Ms. Hasina's visit to India from September 5 to 8, 2022.

Trade and connectivity

Following the conclusion of the seventh round of the India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Commission in June, the two neighbours have expanded their partnership to include Artificial Intelligence, Fintech, cybersecurity, startups, and connectivity. Trade will be a focal point during Ms. Hasina's visit as the two countries gear up to sign a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). The two Prime Ministers are also expected to inaugurate a joint venture power plant soon.

CEPA comes at a time when Bangladesh is set to lose the duty-free and quota-free market-access facility to India after 2026 when it graduates to a developing country. Bangladesh is India's sixth largest trade partner with bilateral trade rising from $2.4 billion in 2009 to $10.8 billion in 2020-21. Bangladesh imports critical industrial raw material from India on which its exports are reliant. According to a World Bank working paper, Bangladesh's exports could rise 182% under a free trade agreement. This could become 300% if combined with trade facilitation measures and reduced transaction costs. Bangladesh also could improve several manufacturing industries by leveraging Indian expertise in service sectors.

India and Bangladesh have implemented several projects to boost eastern India-Bangladesh connectivity. India's connectivity projects with ASEAN and Bangladesh will open up the region to economic growth. Bangladesh has expressed its interest in joining the India-Myanmar-Thailand highway project. India-Bangladesh bilateral waterway trade will get boosted as India can now use the Mongla and Chittagong ports. India is rallying Bangladesh to divert its exports through Indian ports in place of Malaysian or Singaporean ports. Enhancing connectivity through India's Northeast and Bangladesh is important for bilateral cooperation. Currently, three express trains and international bus services operate between Indian and Bangladesh.

The sharing of the waters of the Teesta has remained a thorny issue between the two countries since 1947. For West Bengal, Teesta is important to sustain its impoverished farming districts which comprise 12.77% of its population. For Bangladesh, the Teesta's flood plains cover about 14% of the total cropped area of the country and provide direct livelihood opportunities to approximately 7.3% of the population. The countries are expected to sign at least one major river agreement during the upcoming trip.

In 2015, India and Bangladesh resolved the decades-long border dispute through the Land Swap Agreement. Indian Home Minister Amit Shah recently reviewed the security arrangements in the Assam-Meghalaya-Bangladesh tri-junction, which used to a smugglers' route. In 2019, India enacted the National Register of Citizens and the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, which created an uproar within and beyond the borders. Ms. Hasina termed the move as "unnecessary". But her government has mostly kept silent on India's "internal matter" even as political commentators and citizens have feared it could have ripple effects for Bangladesh. The detainees caught at the border that year claimed they were Bangladeshi citizens who were returning to the country on failing to obtain Indian citizenship.

Regional geopolitics

Chinese inroads into the neighborhood have been a cause of worry for India. China has been actively pursuing bilateral ties with Bangladesh. Bangladesh had successfully approached China for a mega project to enhance Teesta river water flow. Bangladesh also requires China's support in resolving the Rohingya refugee crisis. Bangladesh is the second biggest arms market for China after Pakistan.

Bangladesh has also been warming up to Pakistan. The two shared frosty ties for decades after Pakistani politicians made unwarranted comments on the International Crimes Tribunal set up by Bangladesh. Although memories of 1971 remain, Bangladesh has expressed its interest in establishing peaceful relations with Pakistan.

In its election manifesto for the 2018 Bangladesh general elections, the ruling Awami League emphasised cooperation with India, including in sharing Teesta waters. Teesta remains a concern for the Bangladeshi population which is dependent on the river for their livelihood. Ms. Hasina has worked on strengthening bilateral ties and has uprooted all anti-India insurgency activities within Bangladesh by leading from the front. But the unresolved Teesta issue does not put her in good standing with the electorate. Many believe that her bold and pragmatic steps in strengthening relations with India have not been adequately reciprocated by Delhi and Kolkata.

India-Bangladesh ties witnessed the lowest ebb during the 2001-2006 tenure of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). In 2004, a 10-truck arms and ammunition haul took place in Chittagong. Investigators believed that the delivery of the smuggled arms was intended for the United Liberation Front of Asom, a militant group seeking Assam's independence from India. These illicit activities created tensions between the countries. The BNP's short-sighted and unwise handling of relations with India cost it dearly, for Delhi's corridors of power lost confidence in the party. But by openly flouting its warm relations with India as a safeguard for continuity of power, the Awami League is not playing smart with the electorate either.

In Bangladesh, there is a prevailing perception that India's goodwill towards the country is aligned to one particular political ideology or school of thought as opposed to Bangladeshi society at large. For India, the challenge is to earn the trust and confidence of Bangladeshis across the spectrum and strata. Ms. Hasina has deepened ties with the Narendra Modi government, but the two have failed to resolve long-standing issues such as Teesta water-sharing and killings at the border. The question is, how these factors may affect elections in Bangladesh. For India it will take more than cosy relations with one particular government to have long-term stable relations with its most trusted friend in the neighbourhood. Just as Bangladeshis remain grateful to India for the generous support extended by India during the Liberation War of 1971, they are equally sensitive to being treated with respect and fairness, no matter who rules their country.

Syed Munir Khasru is Chairman of the international think tank, The Institute for Policy, Advocacy, and Governance, which has a presence in Delhi, Dhaka, Melbourne, Dubai, and Vienna. Email: munir.khasru@ipag.org

Changing the age of consent

Older adolescents engaging in consensual and non-exploitative acts find themselves embroiled in the criminal justice system

SWAGATA RAHA
& SHRUTHI RAMAKRISHNAN

In August 2, in *Rama @ Bande Rama v. State of Karnataka*, the Karnataka High Court quashed criminal proceedings of rape and kidnapping under the Indian Penal Code, and penetrative and aggravated penetrative sexual assault under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, which had been initiated based on a complaint of a 17-year-old girl's father against her 20-year-old partner. The girl stated in court that the acts were consensual and she had married the accused after she had turned 18. The marriage was registered and a child was born to the couple. The High Court observed that "if the court would shut its doors to the couple who are married and bringing up the child, the entire proceedings would result in miscarriage of justice."

Normalcy of relationships

With the enactment of POCSO, a number of young couples in consensual and non-exploitative relationships have found themselves embroiled in the criminal justice system. Since consent of a "child" is immaterial, consensual sexual intercourse with or among adolescents is treated on a par with rape. While boys/young men are charged with sexual offences, the girls are treated as victims and institutionalised in children's homes when they refuse to return to their parents or their parents refuse to accept them. Faced with criminal prosecution and incarceration, the only relief available to the couple is to urge the High Court to quash the case by using its inherent power under Section 482 of the Criminal Procedure Code, "to prevent abuse of the process of any Court or otherwise to secure the ends of justice."

Several other High Courts too have recognised the normalcy of these relationships, the futility of prosecuting romantic cases owing to the consensual nature of the relationships and marriage between the parties, as well as the harmful impact of continued prosecution on both parties. While quashing a similar case in *Vijaylakshmi v. State Rep* (2021), the Madras High Court observed that, "[p]unishing an adolescent boy who enters into a relationship with a minor girl by treating him as an offender, was never the objective of the POCSO Act." In *Raj Kumar v. State of Himachal Pradesh* (2021), the Himachal Pradesh High Court allowed a petition filed by the minor girl's father for quashing the trial against his son-in-law. It observed: "If criminal proceedings are allowed to continue, the same will adversely affect the married life of his daughter..." In *Skhemborlang Suting v. State of Meghalaya* (2021), a couple got entangled under the POCSO Act when the husband took his wife, who was 17, to a hospital for a check-up after she became pregnant. The Meghalaya High Court quashed the case observing that an application of the Act would "result in the breakdown of a happy family relationship and the possible consequence of the wife having to take care of a baby with no support..."

An analysis by Enfold Proactive Health Trust of 1,715 "romantic" cases under the POCSO Act decided between 2016-2020 by Special Courts in Assam, Maharashtra, and West Bengal revealed that such cases constituted 24.3% of the total cases decided by the courts. The parents and relatives of the girls constituted 80.2% of the complainants. They approached the police after the girl went "missing", or eloped with her partner, or a pregnancy was discovered. The victim and the accused were married to each other in only 46.5% of the cases. In 85.5% of the cases, the girls said the relationship was consensual. In 81.5% of the cases, they did not state anything incriminating against the accused during evidence. In 61.7% of the cases, the Special Courts too acknowledged that the relationship was consensual. Moreover, acquittals were recorded in 93.8% of the cases.

Law reform

The high rate of acquittals shows that the law is not in sync with social realities of adolescent relationships. The High Courts have also acknowledged the disruptive impact of the criminal law in such cases. While the marriage between the parties appears to have influenced several High Courts and resulted in the quashing of romantic cases under the POCSO Act, sexual behaviour is normative during adolescence, and not all relationships end in marriage. Blanket criminalisation of such consensual sexual acts involving older adolescents erodes their dignity, best interests, liberty, privacy, evolving autonomy, and development potential. It also impacts the delivery of justice as these cases constitute a large burden on our courts, and divert attention from investigation and prosecution of actual cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation. There is thus a compelling need for law reform to revise the age of consent and prevent the criminalisation of older adolescents engaging in factually consensual and non-exploitative acts.

Swagata Raha and Shruthi Ramakrishnan are with the Research Team at Enfold Proactive Health Trust, Bengaluru

STATE OF PLAY

The problematic Durga Puja push

By promoting religion, the Mamata government is venturing into dangerous territory

SHIV SAHAY SINGH

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's recent decision to increase the honorarium to puja committees organising community Durga Pujas has once again triggered a debate on the relationship between state and religion. Since 2018, when the Trinamool Congress government started giving ₹10,000 to each community Durga Puja club, the honorarium has increased to ₹60,000. The number of clubs receiving the cash benefit has risen from 18,000 in 2018 to 43,000 today. Ms. Banerjee's initiative will cost the State exchequer ₹258 crore. This is besides the 60% subsidy the government hands out to puja pandals on electricity tariff.

The controversial decision comes at a time when the State is reeling under a financial crunch, physical infrastructure is crumbling, and the government is unable to pay dearness allowance dues to State government employees.

Durga Puja is a week-long festival organised with unparalleled pomp and splendour in West Bengal. It also provides a great opportunity for political mobilisation. For the last 11 years, Ms. Banerjee has used the opportunity well by inaugurating hundreds of community pujas weeks before the actual festival and instituting State government awards to honour community pujas. The new culture of providing political patronage to big-ticket Durga Pujas has helped the Trinamool to extend its influence.

The pujas contribute significantly to the State's economy. A study by the British Council in 2019 had estimated that the economic worth of the creative industries around Durga Puja in West Bengal is about ₹32,377 crore and the festival contributes 2.58% to the State's GDP. 'Durga Puja in Kolkata' got an important international recognition in December 2021 by making it to UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The State government is well within its rights to promote Durga Puja, which is a grand spectacle. It has a duty to provide logistical support, ensure safety and security, and maintain law and order as well as traffic during the festival. But providing cash incentives to community Durga Pujas raises troubling questions.

But first, what led to cash offers to community Durga Pujas? In April 2012, less than a year after being voted to power, Ms. Banerjee announced a monthly honorarium to imams and muezzins. After the Calcutta High Court struck down the decision in 2013, honoraria given to imams and muezzins were routed through the State Wakf Board. Just as no imam approached the State government seeking money for performing religious duties, no community puja organiser sought an honorarium from the State. This was purely a 'balancing act' by the Trinamool government. Like most State government schemes, the move was populist and drew loud applause. By providing honoraria to puja committees, the Trinamool government was also aiming to counter allegations made by the BJP, of "Muslim appeasement". Over the last few years, the Trinamool has gained politically by giving money to community puja organisers.

However, by promoting religion, the government is venturing into uncharted territory from where there might be no turning back. Despite changes over the last few years in designs, decorations and themes, community Durga Pujas in West Bengal have remained secular affairs as people from all walks of life and communities participate. With these cash incentives, the pujas could become dependent on the State government. The initiative also allows the government to interfere in community affairs. Above all, providing an honorarium could prevent the natural evolution of a religious and cultural practice that has spanned centuries.

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DATA POINT

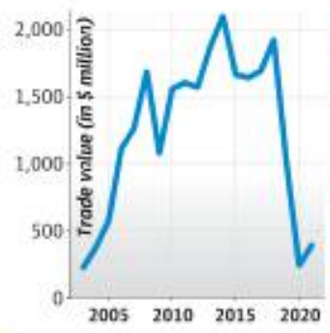
India-Pakistan's trade equations

In 2019, India and Pakistan took severe measures to curb the free flow of goods between them. The terror attack in Pulwama, the cross-border air strikes, and the dilution of Article 370 in J&K were the major reasons for this. However, over the past few days, Pakistan has been reeling from catastrophic floods which have flattened standing crops and led to a fear of food shortage. In this context, Pakistan's Finance Minister said last week that the government could consider importing vegetables and other edible items from India. Data show that before 2019, Pakistan was dependent on India for meat, cotton, and wheat and cereal flour imports. After the curbs, it replaced India's share with imports from China, the U.S. and Brazil.

By **Jasmin Nihalani** and **Vignesh Radhakrishnan**

1 Import dependance

The chart shows Pakistan's imports from India (in $million). The table shows Pakistan's top trade partners and India, their import share and import ranking. For instance, in 2008, 4% of Pakistan's imports came from India, which ranked 8th among Pakistan's partners. In 2021, only 0.5% of imports were from India, which ranked 36

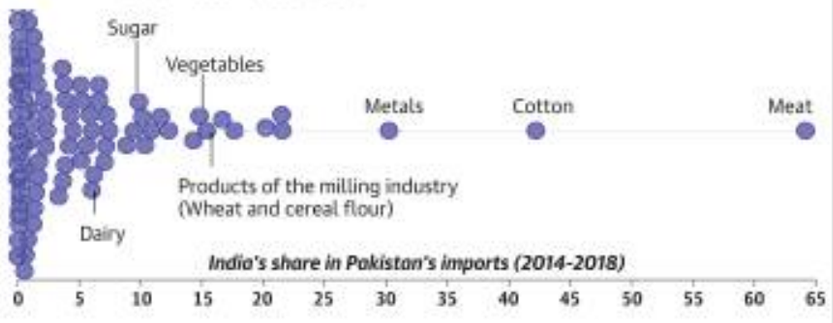


The figures in bracket are import share in %

Partner	2008	2014	2018	2021
China	2 (11.2)	1 (20.2)	1 (24.2)	1 (28.3)
U.A.E	3 (8.9)	2 (14.9)	2 (14.4)	2 (10.1)
Indonesia		5 (4.4)	5 (4.2)	3 (5.8)
U.S.	5 (4.9)		4 (4.9)	4 (5.3)
Saudi Arabia	1 (14.1)	3 (9.3)	3 (5.4)	5 (5.2)
Kuwait	4 (8.1)	4 (6.2)		
India	8 (4%)	6 (4.4)	8 (3.2)	36 (0.5)

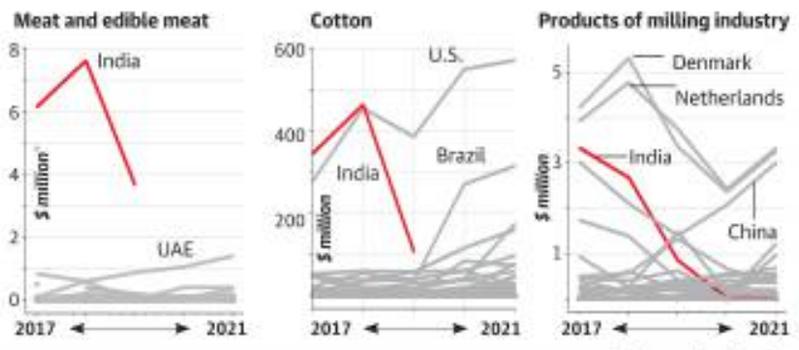
2 Commodity share

The graph shows India's share in Pakistan's total imports for specific products between 2014 and 2018. For instance, 64% of Pakistan's meat imports, 42% of its cotton imports and 15% of products of the milling industry were imported from India in this period



3 Replacements

The charts show Pakistan's imports in $ million between 2017 and 2021 in three products: meat, cotton, and products of the milling industry (wheat, cereal flour, etc). Pakistan stopped meat imports from India but since then, no country has been able to match India's pre-2019 share in meat imports. However, India was replaced by the U.S. and Brazil in cotton imports and by China in flour imports



Source: Comtrade

The Hindu.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO SEPTEMBER 5, 1972

Pak. maps cause delay in delineation

New Delhi, Sept. 4: The Indian and Pakistan military commanders entrusted with the delineation of the line of control in Jammu and Kashmir have not been able to complete their work before the expiry of the revised deadline to-day, as agreed upon during the recent official level talks in Delhi for the implementation of the Simla Agreement. Consequently, there is going to be a further delay in the completion of the military withdrawals across the international border, which will commence only after full agreement has been reached over the delineation of the entire length of the new Jammu and Kashmir line. A Defence Ministry press release issued to-night pointed out that though "substantial progress" was made to-day, the second day of the fourth round of talks at Wagah, the two sides could not complete their work of delineation in time partly because of physical problems created by the different scale maps being used by India and Pakistan. While the Indian maps are one-inch to a mile, Pakistan is using slightly bigger maps which are one-inch to 78 miles. The Indian and Pakistan survey team, which began this time-consuming work only yesterday, have so far cleared only four of the 23 maps dealing with various sectors of the line of control, but they are on the job working overtime to complete the delineation in a thorough fashion without leaving any scope for misunderstanding at a later stage: Once the two Senior Commanders have approved the recommendations of the Sector Commanders and come to an agreement over the prevailing differences in the light of the political directives given to them by their respective governments, the surveyors will not take much time to complete the technicalities of delineation.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO SEPT. 5, 1922

Greek defeat

Paris, Sept. 3: Summing up the results of the big battle in Anatolia, an Angora communique claims that the offensive in Afion Karahissar sector, after having been pressed uninterruptedly for five days, has ended with the defeat of the bulk of the Greek army which has been split in two. The Northern army has been completely destroyed and dispersed. The southern army has suffered severe setbacks in Tulbunar sector and is retreating towards Ushak. War material, including one hundred and fifty guns of all calibres, has been captured. Kedoz and Kutayah have been occupied by the Turks.

FROM PAGE ONE

Soren govt. to seek trust vote on September 5

Mr. Alam had returned from Raipur to attend a Cabinet meeting on September 2 in which the decision was taken to seek trust vote in Assembly. Some UPA legislators, on the way to Ranchi from Raipur, said they have received a letter from Assembly Secretariat that said that Mr. Soren has expressed willingness to move a motion of confidence in the House to prove his government's majority.

In the 81-member House, the JMM-led UPA enjoys an absolute majority with the JMM having 30 legislators, Congress having 18 (three of them, though, were recently caught with a huge cash stash in West Bengal and sent to jail), Rashtriya Janata Dal, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) and Nationalist Congress Party having one each. The Opposition BJP has 26 MLAs, while its ally All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU) has two; two other legislators support them.

Earlier, it was said that a special session of the House was being called for the trust vote. However, Speaker Rabindra Nath Mahto dismissed the claims, stating, "The one-day Assembly session is being called for the completion of business that was left incomplete in the previous session. It is not a special session as there is no political crisis in Jharkhand".

An MLA of the Congress party, on his part, said, "At best you can say it will be an extension of the previous session of the House."

Hasina's visit to focus on water sharing

The Bangladesh PM is also expected to aim at energy cooperation and uninterrupted commerce

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's September 5-8 India visit is expected to focus on issues that can help her counter negative factors ahead of the election scheduled next year, *The Hindu* has learnt from sources working on the agenda of the visit. Apart from engaging Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a political dialogue, the visiting leader is likely to focus on water sharing, energy cooperation, uninterrupted commercial flow and greater connectivity.

"We are sensing that there will be an energy supply element in bilateral agreements between the two sides," said a diplomatic source without getting into the specifics. One of the hallmarks of Ms. Hasina's 13-year-old government has been the stability of energy and power generation in Bangladesh which has drastically reduced load shedding in major cities and industrial areas and ports.

Cementing ties: Narendra Modi and Sheikh Hasina during the inauguration of various projects in Bangladesh in 2021. • PTI

However, since last month Bangladesh has seen more than a 50% hike in energy which has contributed to increased price of essential supplies, creating a challenging situation for her government. A source also hinted that even in the absence of an energy agreement, there is likely to be a "favourable response" from India if Bangladesh was to seek suggestions from the Indian side about how to address the current energy crisis.

Ahead of her visit, Ms. Hasina reached out to the political leadership praising the assistance that Bangladesh received from India during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Hasina's government has been consistent in expressing concern about disruption in the supplies of certain essential commodities for which Bangladesh depends on India.

Regional friendship

Ms. Hasina's stay is expected to include a visit to the famed Sufi shrine at Nizamuddin here as well as a trip to Ajmer Sharif in Rajasthan.

The discussion between the two sides will provide India a window to assess the political might and legacy of Sheikh Hasina who first became Prime Minister in 1996 and dealt with Prime Ministers Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Inder Kumar Gujral and H.D. Deve Gowda. Her next stint at power began in 2009 and has continued uninterrupted till now.

The dominance of the Awami League in Bangladesh and allegations of human rights violation against her government have drawn negative attention from the western powers. However, the visit to India will provide Ms. Hasina an opportunity to showcase her regional friendship ahead of her expected trips to the western destinations later this year.

IN BRIEF

Shah opens four 'smart schools' in Ahmedabad

AHMEDABAD

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday inaugurated four "smart schools" set up by the civic body while taking a veiled swipe at Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal, who has been critical of poor quality education in Gujarat and has promised to overhaul the education sector in the State if AAP is voted to power in the Assembly polls. He said if at all there was any model of primary education, it's Gujarat Model developed by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he was the Chief Minister of the State.

Woman immolates self as police fail to act on plaint

SHAHDOL

A 26-year-old woman sustained severe burns as she immolated herself on the premises of a police station after the police allegedly failed to register a case on her complaint of rape in Madhya Pradesh's Shahdol, an official said on Sunday. Two policemen have been line-attached for dereliction of duty for the incident that took place in the Amlai police station on Friday. The police station in-charge Mohammed Sameer and sub-inspector Savitri Singh have been line-attached, SP Kumar Pratik said. PTI

Gujarat Youth Congress president quits party

AHMEDABAD

A day before Rahul Gandhi's rally in Gujarat, the State Congress youth wing president Vishwanath Vaghela on Sunday resigned from the party and is likely to join the BJP in the coming days. Mr. Vaghela was elected as the youth Congress president through the internal polls. While resigning from the primary membership of the party, Mr. Vaghela said that the party unit in Gujarat was a "divided house" due to infighting among its senior leaders.

Ahead of Bharat Jodo Yatra, Rahul targets PM

Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, K.C. Venugopal, and Mallikarjun Kharge during a rally at Ramlila Maidan. • PTI

He asserted that the Congress along with other Opposition parties will defeat the BJP-Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh [RSS] ideology.

Ever since the BJP came to power, the former Congress chief claimed, there is growing hate. "Hate is a form of fear. When we say hate is increasing in the country, to say it in a different way, fear is increasing in the country – fear of the future, fear of inflation, fear of unemployment and because of this, hatred is increasing," he said.

"This is a battle of ideologies, and the Congress ideology and all other Opposition parties will together defeat the BJP and RSS ideology," Mr. Gandhi added.

The mega rally against price rise on Sunday not only set the stage for the 3,500-km-long *padayatra* from Kanyakumari to Kashmir that Mr. Gandhi will lead over the next five months but also proved to be an occasion for leaders to reiterate their faith in the leadership of the Gandhi family after the high profile exit of Ghulam Nabi Azad.

Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, whose ailing mother recently passed away, is still out of the country but Mr. Gandhi returned to address the party's rally against price rise amid banners and posters asking him to take over as the party chief.

Targeting the Prime Minister, the former Congress chief claimed that Mr. Modi was working 24 hours to benefit two big industrialists. Under Prime Minister Modi, he said, two Indias are being created; one which belongs to the poor where no dream could be accomplished, and the other of a few big businessmen where every dream can be achieved.

"Narendra Modi is taking India backwards. Narendra Modi *ji* is spreading hatred, and fear. This will benefit the country's enemies, it will benefit China, it will benefit Pakistan but not India. The more hatred, anger and fear spread in India, the more it will be weakened," he said. "BJP and RSS leaders divide country and deliberately spread fear," he alleged. "The question is whom do they do it for and why. Who is benefited from this fear and hate. Tell me what benefits the poor, labourers and small traders have got from the Modi government? Two industrialists have benefitted from this fear and hate," he added.

He claimed that Mr. Modi cannot be the Prime Minister without the support of the two big industrialists who control the media that only show the Prime Minister and the BJP.

Mr. Gandhi also alleged that anyone who criticises the Modi government, be it activists or Opposition leaders, is attacked by the government agencies. Referring to his questioning by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for 55 hours in the *National Herald* case, he said, "I want to tell the Prime Minister, I am not not scared of your ED, even if you question me for 500 hours or 5 years, it makes no difference."

Later, in a tweet, Mr. Gandhi said only the Congress ideology and workers can bring the country onto the path of progress.

"The government did not allow the Opposition to speak in Parliament, and the only way for us is to talk directly to people and tell the truth of the country to people and hear them out," he said, adding, "Every Indian citizen has to protect the spirit of the Constitution or else the country wont survive."

Comparing the prices of fuel, cooking gas, edible oil, milk and food items like flour between 2014 and now, Mr. Gandhi said that in the past 70 years, India never witnessed the kind of inflation that it is witnessing now. While the UPA empowered people with measures like the land acquisition law and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, the Centre brought in the now repealed farm laws to help the industrialists, he said. "During the 10 years of UPA, 27 crore people were lifted out of poverty. In the past eight years, Modi *ji* has pushed 23 crore back into poverty," he said.

Mr. Gandhi claimed that the country's situation is such that even if it wants, it cannot give jobs to its youth. The biggest job providers are the micro medium small enterprises (MSME) and their backbone has been destroyed by a flawed GST, he pointed out. Accusing the government of destroying India's economic power, with unemployment touching a 40-year high, he said, "The work we did in 10 years they destroyed it in eight years."

Paytm says no links with traders in loan app case

Funds don't belong to us: company

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

Following searches conducted by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) at locations linked to Paytm Payment Services, the company on Sunday said that the merchants under scrutiny are not Paytm entities and the seized funds do not belong to the company.

The ED on Saturday said it carried out searches as part of investigation in the Chinese micro-loan app case on six premises in Bengaluru, including those of Razorpay Pvt, Cashfree Payments and Paytm Payment Services. "As a part of ongoing investigations on a specific set of merchants, the ED has sought information regarding such merchants to whom we provide payment processing solutions. It is hereby clarified that these merchants are independent entities, and none of them are our group entities," Paytm said in a communique to BSE.

It added that it will continue to fully cooperate with the authorities, and all the directive actions are being duly complied with.

"It may be noted that ED has instructed us to freeze certain amounts from the Merchant IDs of a specific set of merchant entities (as mentioned by the ED in their press release). It may be further noted that none of the funds which have been instructed to be frozen belong to Paytm or any of our group companies," it added. The case relates to alleged extortion and harassment of those who had taken small loans through the mobile apps operated by China-based individuals.

Rajnath to begin 3-day visit to Mongolia today

For first time, Indian Defence Minister is visiting Mongolia

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

In a first, Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is scheduled to visit Mongolia from September 5 to 7.

"The upcoming visit is the first-ever visit by an Indian Defence Minister to Mongolia will further consolidate the defence cooperation and strategic partnership between the two countries," the Defence Ministry said in a statement on Sunday. He is also scheduled to travel to Japan for the 2+2 Ministerial dialogue.

During the visit, Mr. Singh will hold bilateral talks with his Mongolian counterpart Lt Gen. Saikhanbaya and also call on the President of Mongolia, U. Khurelsukh and Chairman of the State Great Khural of Mongolia, G. Zandanshatar.

Rajnath Singh

"During the bilateral talks, the two Defence Ministers shall review the bilateral defence cooperation between India and Mongolia, and explore new initiatives to further strengthen bilateral engagements. The two leaders will also exchange views on regional and global issues of shared interest," the Ministry said.

"The two democracies have a common interest in fostering peace and prosperity in the entire region," it added.

India and Mongolia share a strategic partnership with defence being a key pillar.

The bilateral defence engagements with Mongolia have been expanding over a period of time to include wide ranging contacts between the two countries, including Joint Working Group meeting, military to military exchanges, high level visits, capacity building and training programmes and training bilateral exercises, the statement added.

'Abe considered Manmohan a mentor, Modi a friend'

Adviser to Japanese leader says India is an 'ideal partner'

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Slain Japanese leader Shinzo Abe considered former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh a "mentor", and considered Prime Minister Narendra Modi a "close friend and partner", said the former Japanese Prime Minister's special adviser Tomohiko Taniguchi, and regretted not being able to travel to India in 2019.

Speaking to *The Hindu* during a visit to Delhi last week, Mr. Taniguchi, who as Mr. Abe's speech-writer, had helped draft his famous "confluence of two seas" speech in 2007, also disclosed that Mr. Shinzo Abe had planned to deliver a deeply emotional speech during his scheduled visit to Manipur in 2019, at the memorial to the 1944 Battle of Imphal, one of the biggest battles during the Second World War.

Tomohiko Taniguchi, Shinzo Abe's Adviser

"Over time, Shinzo Abe looked up to Manmohan Singh and he respected Prime Minister Singh... he said Manmohan Singh is one of the few people, [he] could call [his] mentor." Mr. Taniguchi said, adding that the two men met often even after Mr. Abe's first term as PM in 2007, when he had stepped down over a debilitating illness, and again when Mr. Abe returned as Prime Minister (2012-2020).

He said that that Mr. Abe's relationship with Prime Minister Modi was also "unique".

"India a long term bet"

"[Abe] was in favour of those gutsy go-getting and gung ho sort of people''. One of the prime examples is Bibi [Benjamin] Netanyahu, with whom he developed a very close bond... he sensed that [Modi] is a man that he could continue to work with as a close friend and partner."

India-Japan relations entered a more intensive era after Mr. Abe's ascent to power in 2006 and 2012, with the launch of the annual summits between them, the creation of the Quad and its revival in 2017, and the launch of the "2+2 ministerial" meetings as well, during his tenure, the longest for any Japanese Prime Minister.

Ahead of the 2+2 Ministerial expected this week, for which External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh are travelling to Tokyo, Mr. Taniguchi said that Japan sees India as a "long term" bet for ties as a "like-minded" nation.

When asked about New Delhi's stand on the Russia-Ukraine war and China's aggressive exercises around Taiwan, where India did not join the other Quad members, as well as the ongoing "Vostok" military exercises with Russia and China would affect the India-Japan relationship, Mr. Taniguchi said that Mr. Abe believed India was an "ideal partner" given its security concerns.

"Japan is surrounded by 3 hostile nuclear powers: Russia, North Korea, China....Japan needs to secure its national security by allying itself with like-minded partner nations. India remains an ideal partner for Japan and will be so in a long time to come," he said adding that India would soon outnumber China in terms of population; is a strong competitor on technology, one of the biggest economies; and "most importantly", a democracy, he added.

Mr. Taniguchi acknowledged however, that many of the India-Japan projects initiated during Mr. Abe's tenure had moved more slowly than he hoped- including the Ahmedabad-Mumbai high-speed rail, which missed its 2022 deadline, the implementation of the civil nuclear deal, and the lack of progress in the talks for India to buy the Japanese US-2 amphibian.

Speaking about Mr. Abe's plans to help develop India's North-Eastern region, Mr. Taniguchi said that his lasting regret was that his visit to Guwahati and Imphal for the India-Japan annual summit with Mr. Modi in December 2019 was cancelled at the last minute. After violent protests broke out in Assam over the government's decision to bring the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), both New Delhi and Tokyo decided to postpone the visit. However, the visit could never be rescheduled as the COVID pandemic broke out, and then in August 2020, Mr. Abe announced that he was stepping down as his earlier illness, ulcerative colitis, had resurfaced. In July 2022 he was assassinated during a campaign rally.

'Empowering women, tribes is our model'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Sunday said the empowerment of women and tribal communities was at the core of the State's governance model under his government.

He said this at a function where he was conferred the Capital Foundation 'Lifetime Achievement Award' in New Delhi, in recognition of his distinctive and outstanding leadership qualities. The award was conferred to him in the presence of former Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana. Speaking at the event, Mr. Patnaik said that he dedicated "this award to the 4.5 crore people of Odisha who have been continuously blessing me to serve them for the past 22 years.

" After the super cyclone of 1999, who would have thought that Odisha will set global benchmarks in disaster management and get awarded by the United Nations? Odisha, once known for 'poverty', is now known for the fastest 'poverty reduction' in our country," Mr. Patnaik said.

"Our governance model, rooted in the empowerment of women, Mission Shakti, is something which we are truly proud of. Similarly, Empowerment of tribal communities has always been close to my heart and Odisha leads the country in providing land rights under the Forest Dwellers Act. More than half a million tribal girls study in our hostels. Farmers have always been the backbone of our State and their hard work has fetched the State the Krishi Karman Award four times. Odisha is the only State to have doubled farmers' incomes," he said.

'Can't expect judiciary to speak in one voice'

Ex-CJI seeks help for people in slums

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana on Saturday said the Supreme Court and the judiciary, as an institution, should not be judged on the basis of any one opinion.

"Over seven decades, a variety of opinions have emanated from the Supreme Court. As an institution, the judiciary cannot be judged on the basis of any one opinion... The country cannot expect a constitutional body, consisting of over 30 independent constitutional authorities, to always speak in one voice," the former CJI said.

"An institution speaking in one voice will not be a sign of a healthy democracy. Like every other sphere, diverse views and viewpoints are essential for the judicial institution and democracy," he added.

Though Justice Ramana made no mention, the court had recently been criticised for its judgments in the Prevention of Money Laundering Act and Zakia Jafri cases.

Justice Ramana said the judiciary had been confronted with many challenges over its 72-year period. "The Supreme Court has distinguished itself by ironing out many wrinkles," he said. As CJI, Justice Ramana said, he had focussed on the "long-standing issues of augmenting judicial infrastructure, filling up of judicial vacancies, and increasing efficiency by adopting technology".

Ex-CJI N.V. Ramana with Naveen Patnaik. • PTI

India faces "dual realities", while aiming for space, Moon and Mars, do not forget the "little stars" struggling on the streets and slums of the nation, Justice Ramana said.

He was delivering the annual Capital Foundation Society lecture at the India International Centre here in the presence of Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the society.

APPEAL

I am Sornam aged 61 years old. Kindly help me to undergo Chemotherapy as I have been diagnosed with Metastatic Carcinoma at Venkateswara Hospitals, Chennai. I come from a very poor family and cannot afford the huge treatment expenditure of Rs.10,00,000/-. The donations sent through Ch/D.D/NEFT Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C No.60182010063310, IFSC No. CNRB0016018) favouring **WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE** are entitled for exemption under 80G IT. Please give us your e mail id.

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Sornam

Rally an effort to 'relaunch' Rahul: BJP

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Taking a dig at former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi, the BJP on Sunday said his speech during the *Mehangai Par Halla Bol* rally here was "immature".

The party said the rally was less about price rise and more about yet another relaunch of Mr. Gandhi

Addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters, spokesperson Sambit Patra said Mr. Gandhi "doesn't even know whether flour is solid or liquid", yet insisted on "speaking on every subject". Mr. Gandhi had said that flour which was earlier "₹22 per litre, is now ₹40 per litre", but he immediately corrected it to kilograms.

He termed Mr. Gandhi's remarks on the judiciary as "contempt of court." Mr. Gandhi had said that there was pressure on all the institutions, including the judiciary and the media.

Earlier, former Union Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore said the real purpose of the rally was to relaunch Mr. Gandhi. "This rally is meant to save the family... This rally is 'Rahul Gandhi relaunch 4.0', as no one wants to lead the Congress," he said.

Call for Rahul Gandhi to take up Congress mantle grows louder

At party's rally against price rise, senior members heap praises on his leadership

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Reiterating faith: Congress supporters during the party's *Mehangai Par Halla Bol* rally on price rise, at the Ramlila Maidan in New Delhi on Sunday. • PTI

Amid a huge banner that read "We want Rahul Gandhi as president", several Congress leaders at the *Mehangai Par Halla Bol* rally at the Ramlila Maidan here on Sunday reiterated their faith in the leadership abilities of the former party chief.

As soon as Mr. Gandhi came on the stage, the crowd gave him a standing ovation and raised slogans of "Rahul Gandhi *Zindabad*".

Though none of the senior leaders who spoke from the dais before Mr. Gandhi directly referred to the upcoming presidential election of the party, many stressed that only Mr. Gandhi had been taking on Prime Minister Narendra Modi "fearlessly" for the past eight years.

Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdury, his deputy, Gaurav Gogoi, all spoke about Mr. Gandhi's leadership in highlighting issues pertaining to the common people.

"The government agreed for a debate on inflation after we fought from Parliament to streets under Rahul Gandhiji's leadership. Even then, only five hours were allotted and the Congress got 28 minutes," Mr. Kharge recalled.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, who is being considered as a serious contender in the presidential race, led a scathing attack on the BJP and lauded the Gandhis. "The people in the BJP are fascists, they only wear the mask of democracy. The situation of the entire country is very concerning, the Constitution is being destroyed, democracy is in danger. Mr. Modi has forgotten the things he had said during UPA rule," Mr. Gehlot said.

"The credibility of Gandhis is highest and even more than yours (Modi's), as no one in the Gandhi family has held any position in the government, including being the Prime Minister," he added. Mr. Gehlot also said that the agitation led by Anna Hazare and Arvind Kejriwal was a conspiracy against the Congress-led UPA government.

"A strong speech by Rahul Gandhi at Congress' *Mehengai Par Halla Bol* rally' roused the huge crowds thronging the Ram Lila Maidan. Now to take the message across the country in the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra!" tweeted Lok Sabha member Shashi Tharoor, who is also a member of the G-23, or the ginger group pushing for internal reforms. Mr. Tharoor, who is considering contesting the presidential poll, reportedly met Mr. Gehlot.

While G-23 members like Bhupinder Singh Hooda addressed the gathering, others like Manish Tewari and Anand Sharma were not present. Several senior leaders like Sachin Pilot, Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly Partap Singh Bajwa spoke about Mr. Gandhi's upcoming Bharat Jodo Yatra and the need to strengthen their leader's resolve.

Cyrus Mistry: construction group scion to Tata chairman

He was the second non-Tata ever to head the group

LALATENDU MISHRA
MUMBAI

Cyrus P. Mistry, a scion of the Shapoorji Pallonji Group, who went on to head the sprawling Tata Group as chairman of the holding company Tata Sons for four years before his sudden ouster in 2016, died in a car accident on Sunday.

Mr. Mistry, 54, is survived by his wife Rohiqa and two sons.

The youngest son of the late construction tycoon Pallonji Mistry, he was handpicked by Ratan Tata to succeed him and assumed charge of the Tata Group in 2012, on Mr. Tata's retirement.

Fresh dynamism

A civil engineering graduate from London's Imperial College with a Master of Science in Management from the London Business School, Mr. Mistry was only the second non-Tata ever to head the group. The relatively young and soft-spoken Mr. Mistry soon began to make changes in the group companies' governance structures in an ostensible effort to infuse fresh dynamism.

Among his achievements at the Tata Group's helm, he

Cyrus P. Mistry

is credited with having overseen the turnaround of Tata Motors, which has now emerged as a significant player in the passenger car industry.

A votary for exiting all loss-making ventures, Mr. Mistry formed a group executive council that was tasked with framing strategies for the group. However, some of his decisions appear to have been controversial and irked the Tatas, and barely four years into his term, Mr. Mistry was ousted in an abrupt boardroom move in 2016.

A protracted and see-saw litigation followed that finally culminated in May, when the Supreme Court dismissed a plea of the Shapoorji Pallonji Group seeking a review of its 2021 verdict, which had upheld the Tata Group's decision to oust Mr. Mistry as the executive chairman of Tata Sons.

More recently, Mr. Mistry oversaw the venture capital firm Mistry Ventures LLP, which he had helped establish in 2018.

A big loss: Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled Mr. Mistry's death in a Twitter post.

"The untimely demise of Shri Cyrus Mistry is shocking. He was a promising business leader who believed in India's economic prowess. His passing away is a big loss to the world of commerce and industry. Condolences to his family and friends. May his soul rest in peace," Mr. Modi said in a tweet.

"I am deeply saddened by the sudden and untimely demise of Mr. Cyrus Mistry," Tata Sons chairman N. Chandrasekaran said in a statement. "He had a passion for life, and it is really tragic that he passed away at such a young age. My deepest condolences and prayers for his family in these difficult times," he said.

Azad unveils his road map for J&K at rally

Ex-Congress leader stresses restoration of full statehood, right to land and employment for natives

PEERZADA ASHIQ
JAMMU

New beginning: Former Chief Minister and ex-Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad addressing a public rally in Jammu on Sunday. • PTI

Former Chief Minister and ex-Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad on Sunday made his road map for Jammu and Kashmir public and stressed the restoration of "full statehood and right to land and employment to native domiciles", while distancing from demands such as the pre-August 5, 2019 position or the unification of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir.

"Our agenda is for all. We will fight for the restoration of full statehood and the right to land and employment to native domiciles. We don't want an Assembly with a Lieutenant-Governor but a Governor. We don't want outsiders to apply in J&K for jobs, which equals a drop in the ocean. If they (outsiders) apply, jobs will vanish for locals," Mr. Azad said.

He was addressing his first rally in Jammu since he quit the Congress last month. He plans to launch a political party soon.

Unlike regional parties in the Union Territory, Mr. Azad was cautious to touch on any emotive issues such as Article 370, seeking restoration of the pre-August 5, 2019 position, mentioning Pakistan or the demand to re-unify the erstwhile State of J&K, which included Ladakh.

In a fleeting reference to J&K's special status, Mr. Azad said it was the Dogra king Maharaja Hari Singh who negotiated a J&K Constitution within the Indian Constitution in 1947. "All the Indian Prime Ministers, including non-Congress PMs, accepted it (J&K Constitution) in both Houses of Parliament. Who am I to question or criticise it," he said.

Elaborating on his road map for the Union Territory, Mr. Azad said he would work for the "honour, dignity, integrity of the people of J&K". "For that we need confidence-building. Also, we need to exhibit brotherhood and break the sand walls of hatred created between communities. Hindus, Muslims and Christians are my heart beats," Mr. Azad said.

He said the people of J&K would decide the name and the flag for his party "by taking into consideration the Ganga-Jamuni culture". "Our party's name will neither reflect Moulvi's Urdu nor Pandit's Sanskrit but Hindustani, a popular language across the country," he said.

Mr. Azad said he had plans to work on generating employment for both educated unemployed and less-educated unemployed.

"I have seen the mountains of J&K closely. Places like Bungas and Tosaimadan will accommodate over one crore tourists. This needs vision. J&K is home to a treasure," Mr. Azad said.

Referring to human rights violations witnessed in J&K in the past, Mr. Azad said that all communities had suffered, including Hindus and Muslims. "I want all those migrant Pandits who intend to return to do that. The killings witnessed recently should stop. I want return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits," Mr. Azad said.

Attacking the Congress, Mr. Azad said he had witnessed jail term along with Indira Gandhi in the past and never compromised on his principles.

He said, "The Congress is not made by computers, tweets, SMSes. It's sad that misinformation about me is being created on WhatsApp. I wish the Congress lives in their tweets and I get to live on the ground with ordinary and poor people."

NCP backs Uddhav over staging annual Dasara rally

Only Thackerays can hold rally at Shivaji Park: Jayant Patil

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE
PUNE

Amid the raging tussle between the rival Shiv Sena factions over who would hold the party's annual Dasara rally at Shivaji Park in Mumbai, the Opposition Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), backing the Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena faction, said that only a gathering presided by the Thackeray family would be considered a "legitimate" one.

Rebuking Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's faction, NCP State president Jayant Patil on Sunday said that as the Dasara rally was a tradition started by Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray, the "real" Dasara gathering at Shivaji Park could only be the one that was held by the Thackeray family.

New direction

"Balasaheb Thackeray started this tradition which has been carried on for the past several years by [Sena president] Uddhav Thackeray. So, only the Thackeray family has a right to hold it... This year's rally will give a new direction to the Shiv Sainiks," Mr. Patil said.

The Shiv Sena, the NCP and the Congress constituted the tripartite 'Maha Vikas Aghadi' coalition before Mr. Shinde's intra-party rebellion plunged the Sena into turmoil and toppled the MVA government helmed by Mr. Uddhav Thackeray.

After the revolt that altered political equations, the rebel faction had been arguing that the Thackeray camp had lost its right to hold the Dasara rally as it had "forsaken" Hindutva ideals.

Hitting out at Mr. Shinde, Mr. Uddhav Thackeray asserted that he would hold the Dasara rally irrespective of the consequences.

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e-mail ID : cceuip1987@gmail.com / louiipbbsr@gmail.com

TENDER CANCELLATION NOTICE

It is notified that, the Tender published on Dated-24.11.2018 vide e-Procurement Notice No - CCE, UIIP-06(01)/2018-19 Dated-13.11.2018 is hereby cancelled.

Chief Construction Engineer, Upper Indravati Project, Mukhiguda
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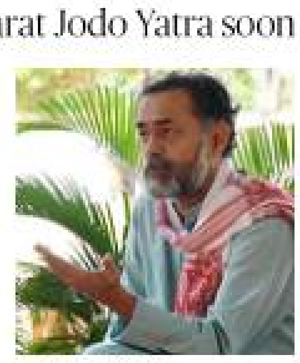
Yogendra Yadav opts for a sabbatical from SKM

He will join the Bharat Jodo Yatra soon

A. M. JIGEESH
NEW DELHI


Yogendra Yadav

Academic-turned-political activist Yogendra Yadav has decided to opt for a "two-year" leave from the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), a platform of farmer unions.

Mr. Yadav, who plays a key role in charting the activities of the SKM, will soon join the Bharat Jodo Yatra led by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. He has taken permission from the SKM general body held here on Sunday, to go on leave.

Talking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Yadav said that for the next two years, he would be completely involved in an effort to create a bridge between political parties and people's movements, farmers' and workers' movements, and anti-Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) movements. He said he would coordinate not just with the Congress but all political parties that offer genuine resistance.

"Right now the challenge is to save the country and the Constitution," he added.

He said he wanted to take the experience he had gained from the farmers' movement to a higher level.

"What is the point of this experience if it stops only at the repeal of three laws. We don't know if after two years we will have this Constitution of the country or that it [the country] will be made a Hindu Rashtra. So right now, every success must be linked to that larger challenge," he added.

He said his work in the immediate future would be connected with anything that contributes to the 2024 Lok Sabha election. "I will continue to function as a volunteer of the SKM," he said.

'Former CJI was silent on Assam NRC irregularities'

Ex-coordinator flags flaws in exercise

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

The exercise to update the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam was an expensive failure and former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi was silent on the irregularities committed under former State NRC Coordinator Prateek Hajela, his successor Hitesh Dev Sarma said.

The Supreme Court, which monitored the NRC exercise, transferred Mr. Hajela, an Assam-Meghalaya cadre IAS officer, to his home State Madhya Pradesh soon after the complete draft list of citizens was published on August 31, 2019. About 19.06 lakh out of the 3.3 crore applicants were left out of the list due to lack of proper documents.

40% were ineligible

"The family tree verification part of the exercise was faulty. I had checked the documents of 2,300 people after taking charge and found 900 of them were enlisted erroneously, which suggests 40% of the people included are ineligible," Mr. Sarma, who retired as NRC Coordinator on July 31, said.

Mr. Sarma blamed his predecessor for all the anomalies, including underpayment of data entry operators engaged in the updating exercise, despite striking a hefty deal with system integrator Wipro.

Aabhijeet Sharma of Assam Public Works, the NGO whose petition in the court more than a decade ago led to the updating of NRC, apologised to the people of Assam for facilitating an exercise that "helped foreigners become Indians instead of ejecting them".

Insisting that 100% re-verification was necessary to save the indigenous people of Assam from being pulverised by "illegal migrants", he said his organisation would approach the courts again for an audit of the ₹1,600-crore spent on the NRC updating exercise. The BJP-led Assam government, too, wants the NRC to be re-verified.

TELANGANA STATE MEDICAL SERVICES & INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Director of Health Campus, Sultan Bazar, Hyderabad-95, Telangana State
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Tenders are invited through e-procurement platform (online) for Procurement and supply of following under Rate contract : 1. General Consumables, 2. Specialty Consumables, 3. Devices, 4. Sutures from Manufacturers, Importers and Authorized Distributers. Managing Director, TSMSIDC reserves the right to cancel th tender at any time without assigning any reason. For complete details, please visit Web site https://tender.telangana.gov.in from 05.09.2022 onwards.
RO No: 625-PPICL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2022-23 Sd/- MANAGING DIRECTOR

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Notice Inviting E-Tender ICA-T15693(3)/2022
Ref. No.: WBPDCL / Tend-Adv/22-23/Corp/CC-970 Date: 02.09.2022
NIT No.: WBPDCL /CORP/NIT/E1566/22-23 Dated: 25.07.2022
E-Tenders in prescribed format are invited at https://wbtenders.gov.in. by the General Manager(M&C), WBPDCL, from eligible agencies/companies for "Hiring of a Non-A.C four wheeler commercial vehicle for official work at Asansol Area, through e-tendering for 01 (one) year". Tender Document Download Start Date: 05.09.2022 from 17.00 hrs. Bid Submission End Date: 19.09.2022 at 10:00 hrs. Contact Person: Mr. Subhasis Bhattacharya, Manager (Civil)(M&C). Contact No: 9475851451. E-mail: subhattacharya@wbpdcl.co.in For details please visit https:// wbtenders.gov.in

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Bids for Various Works related Major Repair Work on various Roads of Municipal Board Nokha are invited from interested bidders upto 01.09.2022 [09:30 AM] to 20.09.2022 [06:00 PM], other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal http://www.pwd.rajasthan.gov.in. & eproc.rajasthan.gov.in & http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in of the state and departmental website. The approximate value of the procurement is Rs. 390.00 Lakh.
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UBN :- PWD2223WSOB06643
PWD2223WSOB06644
Executive Engineer
PWD Dn. Nokha
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The West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited
(A Govt. of West Bengal Enterprise)
Corporate Identity No. U40104WB1985SGC039154
Registered & Corporate Office : Bidyut Unnayan Bhaban
Plot No.: 3/C, LA - Block, Sector- III, Bidhannagar, Kol-700106
Notice Inviting E-Tender
Ref. No.: WBPDCL / Tend-Adv/22-23/Corp/CC-969 Date: 02.09.2022
NIT No.: WBPDCL /CORP/NIT/E1585/22-23 Dated: 02.09.2022
E-Tenders in prescribed format are invited at https://wbtenders.gov.in. by the General Manager(M&C), WBPDCL, from eligible agencies/companies for "E-tender cum reverse auction for comprehensive Operation & maintenance of 1089 kWp Grid Connected Rooftop Solar Photovoltaic Power Plant on different buildings in Bandel Thermal Power Station, Hooghly, West Bengal including warrantee obligation for 03 (Three) years". Tender Document Download Start Date: 05.09.2022 from 10.00 hrs. Bid Submission End Date: 13.09.2022 at 17.00 hrs. Contact Person: Smt. Sulagna Dass, Manager (PS),M&C. Contact No: 8240042058. E-mail: s.dass@wbpdcl.co.in For details please visit https:// wbtenders.gov.in
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क्रमांक : ए.सी.ई./बी.टी.पी./निविदा/2022-23/डी-1406 दिनांक : 29.08.2022
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'Dark sky reserve' to come up in Ladakh

Hanle, situated 4,500 m above sea level, is one of the world's most optimal sites for astronomical studies

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

In a first-of-its-kind initiative, the Department of Science & Technology (DST) has announced the setting up of India's first dark sky reserve at Hanle in Ladakh in the next three months.

Hanle, which is about 4,500 metres above sea level, hosts telescopes and is regarded as one of the world's most optimal sites for astronomical observations. However, ensuring that the site remains well-suited for astronomy implies keeping the night sky pristine, or ensuring minimal interference to the telescopes from artificial light sources such as electric lights and vehicular lights from the ground.

A dark sky reserve is a designation given to a place that has policies in place to ensure that a tract of land or region has minimal artificial light interference. The International Dark Sky Association is a U.S.-based non-profit that designates sites as international dark sky places, parks, sanctuaries and reserves, depending on the criteria they meet. Several such reserves exist around the world but none so far in India.

Reaching the stars: The Himalayan Chandra Telescope at Hanle in Ladakh. • FILE PHOTO

In June, a three-way Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed among the Union Territory administration, the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh, and the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru, which uses and maintains the telescopes, for launching the dark space reserve. Science Minister Jitendra Singh, on Saturday, following a meeting with R.K. Mathur, Lieutenant-Governor, Ladakh, said that the site "will have activities to help in boosting local tourism and economy through interventions of science and technology".

Annapurni Subramaniam, director, Indian Institute of Astrophysics, said that to promote astro-tourism, villages around Hanle would be encouraged to promote homestays equipped with telescopes that visitors can use to view the night sky.

Villagers would also be trained to help visitors with astronomical observations.

"There would be some restrictions on vehicles and headlights during the evening. There will be delineators on roads like you do outside observatories. People can come, park, observe the sky and stay in homestays," she told *The Hindu*.

Ideal conditions

The Indian Astronomical Observatory, the high-altitude station of the IIA, is situated to the north of Western Himalayas, at an altitude of 4,500 metres above mean sea level. Located atop Mt. Saraswati in the Nilamkhul Plain in the Hanle Valley of Changthang, it is a dry, cold desert with sparse human population.

The cloudless skies and low atmospheric water vapour make it one of the best sites in the world for optical, infrared, sub-millimetre, and millimetre wavelengths.

The Himalayan Chandra Telescope, High Energy Gamma Ray Telescope, Major Atmospheric Cherenkov Experiment Telescope and GROWTH-India are the prominent telescopes located at the Hanle observatory.

Captive Assam elephant abused in T.N., says PETA

Assam officials in Chennai to inspect elephant's condition

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), India has submitted a veterinary inspection report to Forest Department officials in Tamil Nadu and Assam, to establish the continued abuse of a captive female elephant, Joymala, in a temple.

A four-member team from Assam, headed by Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Hridesh Mishra, is currently in Tamil Nadu to inspect the condition of the elephant.

Joymala, renamed Jeymalyatha, was reportedly given on a six-month lease to Tamil Nadu from Assam in 2008 and never returned, making her continued use in the southern State illegal under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

Joymala was given on a six-month lease to Tamil Nadu from Assam in 2008.

The elephant was kept in the illegal custody of the Srivilliputhur Nachiyar Thirukovil temple for over a decade, PETA India said.

PETA India veterinarian Nithin Krishnegowda on Sunday said there had been false claims that Joymala, chained to the floor at the Krishna Kovil temple, was in "fine" health despite being "old" and that all the problematic mahouts who tortured her had been dismissed.

"If she has been found to be healthy enough to travel, she must be transported to an elephant rescue centre immediately, where she can receive specialised care," Mr. Krishnegowda said.

On Friday, the team of officers and veterinarians from Assam met Tamil Nadu government officials in Chennai and handed over documents related to the leasing of Joymala and her current status.

"They said they would study the papers and get back," a team member said.

'Assured return plan of PFRDA in final stages'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) is giving final touches to the assured return investment plan under the NPS architecture, while keeping the option to offer a fixed minimum return or benchmark it to a real-time rate open, a top official has said.

It is most likely to give the final shape to the product by the end of this month. However, the launching may take another few months, PFRDA chairperson Supratim Bandyopadhyay said.

As the name suggests, the scheme intends to offer a minimum guaranteed return to investors. However, the regulator has not yet decided on the quantum.

Scientists remain sceptical about how nano urea benefits crops

While the inventor says farmers are benefiting from it, several experts have questioned the science underlying its efficacy

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

Nano urea, a fertilizer patented and sold by the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Ltd. (IFFCO), has been approved by the government for commercial use because of its potential to substantially reduce the import bill, but several experts have questioned the science underlying its efficacy.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while inaugurating a nano urea production plant at Kalol in Gujarat on May 28, said, "... A small bottle (500 ml) of nano urea is equivalent to one 50-kg bag of granular urea currently used by farmers."

IFFCO's nano urea contains nitrogen, an element critical for plant development, in the form of granules that are a hundred thousand times finer than a sheet of paper. At this nano scale, which is about a billionth of a metre, materials behave differently than in the visible realm.

Ramesh Raliya, 34, who is credited as the inventor of nano urea and is now a consultant with IFFCO, told *The Hindu* that his process used "organic polymers" that kept the nano particles of nitrogen stable and in a form that could be sprayed on plants.

Chemically packaged urea is 46% nitrogen, which means a 45-kg sack contains about 20 kg of nitrogen.

Contrastingly, nano urea sold in 500-ml bottles has only 4% nitrogen (or around 20 g). How this can compensate for the kilograms of nitrogen normally required puzzles scientists.

Plants need nitrogen to make protein and they source almost all of it from soil bacteria which live in a plant's roots and have the ability to break down atmospheric nitrogen, or that from chemicals such as urea into a form usable by plants.

To produce one tonne of wheat grain, a plant needs 25 kg of nitrogen. For rice, it is 20 kg of nitrogen, and for maize, it is 30 kg of nitrogen. Not all the urea cast on the soil, or sprayed on leaves in the case of nano urea, can be utilised by the plant. If 60% of the available nitrogen was used, it would yield 496 kg of wheat grain. Even if 100% of 20 g of nano urea, which is what is effectively available, is utilised by the plant, it will yield only 368 g of grain, said N.K. Tomar, retired Professor of Soil Science at Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hissar, Haryana.

Key element: Nano urea contains nitrogen granules that are a hundred thousand times finer than a sheet of paper. • VIJAY SONEJI

"Therefore, total attempt is futile and causing sheer wastage of money. This claim of IFFCO is unfounded and will be disastrous for farmers," he notes in a letter to the NITI Aayog as well as the National Academy for Agricultural Sciences. Dr. Tomar told *The Hindu* that they had not yet responded to his letter.

Dr. Tomar's views are seconded by I.P. Abrol, former Deputy Director-General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

"Urea is highly water soluble and already reaches the lowest form of concentration when absorbed. How nanoparticles can increase the effectiveness of nitrogen uptake by being still smaller is unclear to me. That foliar spraying (spraying on leaves) improves fertilizer uptake is known for over half a century. So what's new here?" Dr. Abrol asked.

Unlike the coarse particles that farmers throw onto the soil during sowing, the nano particle form of nano urea, when applied on to the leaves, stimulates enzymes such as nitrase and nitrite reductase, which help plants metabolise nitrogen, Dr. Ramesh Raliya said.

Different parts of the plant contain nitrogen in varying proportions and because nano particles are so small and numerous, they have a lot more surface area relative to their volume, compared with the millimetre-size grains of urea that plants are exposed to nearly 10,000 times more in nitrogen.

'Nod based on existing rules'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers on Sunday said nano urea had been allowed for commercial use on the basis of the existing rules that provisionally allow fertilizers to be used based on data from only two cropping seasons.

"It has been wrongly quoted in the news report that the process has been 'fast tracked'. It is clarified that the established and existing procedure for registration of any fertilizer for notification as per Fertiliser Control Order (FCO), 1985 has been fully accounted for," the Ministry said in a statement.

Agnipath top on Army chief's agenda during Nepal trip

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Army chief General Manoj Pande proceeded on a four-day visit to Nepal on Sunday. His visit comes amid Nepal's concerns over the new Agnipath scheme for recruitment of soldiers into the Indian Army.

"This visit will provide an opportunity to take stock of the existing bilateral defence ties and strengthen cooperation in areas of mutual interest," the Army said in a statement.

The Agnipath scheme is expected to figure prominently during Gen. Pande's discussions in Nepal. Ten days ago, Nepal postponed a recruitment drive for Gurkha soldiers into the Indian Army in Butwal.

Nepal domicile Gurkhas

Then, the Ministry of External Affairs stated that the Indian Army would continue to recruit Nepal Domicile Gurkhas (NDGs) under the Agnipath scheme.

There have been apprehensions on the lack of pension for the Agniveers recruited under the scheme.

Continuing a tradition of friendship between both Armies, the Indian Army chief will be conferred with the honorary rank of General of the Nepal Army on Monday in a ceremony at Sital Nivas, the official residence of the President of Nepal, the statement said.

The Army chief is scheduled to visit the Nepal Army headquarters, where he will pay homage to the fallen soldiers and have interactions with the senior leadership of the Nepali Army.

ISRO tests system to recover spent rocket stages

Inflatable Aerodynamic Decelerator successfully test-flown by VSSC on a Rohini-300 sounding rocket

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully tested a technology that could aid cost-effective recovery of spent rocket stages and safely land payloads on other planets.

The Inflatable Aerodynamic Decelerator (IAD) was designed, developed and successfully test-flown by ISRO's Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) on a Rohini-300 (RH300 Mk II) sounding rocket from the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station (TERLS) here on Saturday.

"This demonstration opens a gateway for cost-effective spent stage recovery and this technology can also be used in ISRO's future missions to Venus and Mars," ISRO chairman S. Somanath, who was present during the 12.20 p.m. launch, said.

Describing the IAD as a "game changer" with multiple applications for future missions, the VSSC said this was the first time that an IAD had been designed for spent-stage recovery.

Flight path: The Rohini sounding rocket carrying the IAD lifting off from Thumba in Thiruvananthapuram on Saturday.

As its name suggests, the IAD serves to decelerate an object plunging down through the atmosphere.

For Saturday's demonstration, the IAD, made of Kevlar fabric coated with polychloroprene, was packed into the payload bay of the rocket.

After the nose-cone of the rocket separated, the IAD inflated, balloon-like, at a height of 84 km using compressed nitrogen stored in a gas bottle. The IAD systematically reduced the velocity of the payload through aerodynamic drag, the VSSC said.

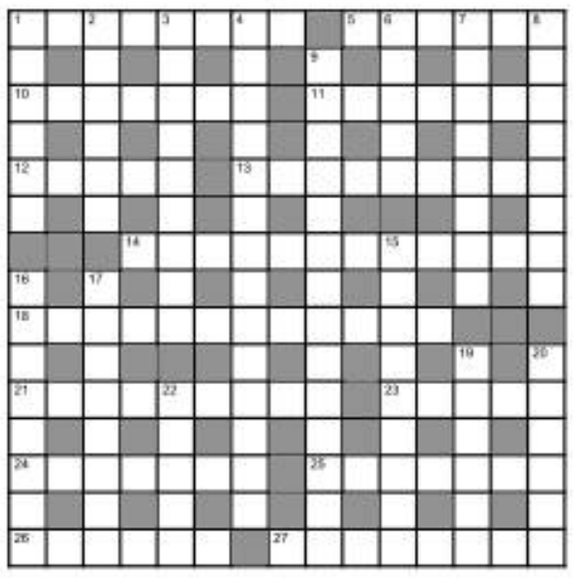
Once the IAD fell into the sea, it deflated by firing a deflation pyro valve. The pneumatic system used for inflating the IAD was developed by the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC), Valiyamala.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD + 13652

(set by Arden)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN



Across

1 Ringtones are different (8)
5 Nail biting old woman in Malaysia (6)
10 Relinquish control, take day off in German city (7)
11 A Romance language first cited in criminal action (7)
12 Carol sipping long cocktail (5)
13 American trades done within minutes in the capital (9)
14 Being cruel, began having wild honey (5-7)
18 Difficult to carry a lay-by (4,8)
21 Dolly took female into an ancient temple (9)
23 Ferment in Asia, reportedly (5)
24 A gentle movement, so stylish (7)
25 China gets support from the east at the conference (7)
26 Finally get there from bottom to top and tie-up (6)
27 Raised to become a space traveller (8)

Down

1 Share manipulation by the hour – it's the same old story (6)
2 It's transgression to take over mail (4,2)
3 Russian set up, Bill negotiates (9)
4 Intricate organ, perhaps yet to be explored (5,9)
6 Master of ceremony's gone at last, I cover the church (5)
7 Six footer I love finds the remedy (8)
8 Satellite lost edge, had many problems (8)
9 "They're well known family" means something else (9,5)
15 EEC neatly managed to get some fuel (9)
16 Cargo for trendy males stopped mid way (8)
17 Rupert in trouble for being lewd (8)
19 It's local, I could source some material (6)
20 Way mature people put up a show (6)
22 Lug him on the way (5)

SUDOKU

	9			1		8		2
			6				1	
			2				4	
		3	1	9	7			8
4								3
7			3	2	4	1		
	3				2			
	8				1			
2		6		3			8	

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 13651

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

6	1	5	7	3	8	4	2	9
4	2	3	5	9	6	1	7	8
7	8	9	2	1	4	5	6	3
5	9	6	3	2	7	8	4	1
8	3	4	6	5	1	7	9	2
2	7	1	8	4	9	6	3	5
9	5	7	4	8	3	2	1	6
1	6	8	9	7	2	3	5	4
3	4	2	1	6	5	9	8	7

FAITH

Path of renunciation

In the Bhagavata Purana, the narration about Kardama and Devahuti exemplifies the salient features of Pravritti and Nivritti in the lives of people, said Sri B. Sundarkumar in a discourse. Pravritti is our involvement in worldly matters and is natural to all of us. But at some point of time, in the course of many births, the jivatma also gains spiritual maturity in stages when the strong yearning to get out of this bondage with the material aspects of living, takes root.

After a fulfilling life in samsara, Kardama opts for the path of renunciation, Nivritti, and retires to the forest to practise meditation and bhakti. But Devahuti typifies the efforts of a majority of us who are yet to get into Nivritti. She is fortunate to get instruction from her son Kapila, the Lord incarnate. Her intuition tells her that the tree of samsara can be severed by His grace alone. Though Kapila could have given His mother immediate release, He only gives her clear-cut instruction about how to fight the challenges in the path to renunciation. As long as the senses and the mind are outward bound and attracted to the world, janma is sure for the aspirant. To overcome further births one has to control the mind and keep it detached. The mind, like the lock that is used to open as well as close, is the cause of bondage and release.

But Devahuti tells Kapila that attachment only grows stronger owing to past vasanas and that it is not possible to be free of these. How is one to deal with this standoff reality? Then Kapila shows that bhakti alone has the power to cut the knot of attachment. How is one to attain Bhakti? Is it owing to birth, wealth, or scholarship? Bhakti is developed through association with the way of life of the pious and realised souls who have renounced all.

ASK US

VIDYA BALA

Q. Recently, my wife came across a close contact who is advising investing in an agro-company based out of Chennai. These kinds of companies are asking to invest amounts of ₹1 lakh/₹ 2 lakh etc. and are giving guarantees of 15% and above, plus investment back in one year. I have advised her against it because quick money is never true and easy. Is there a way for us to verify the genuineness of such schemes in India?

PRABHU

A. It is a good thing that you are being cautious with such solicitations. When you are investing in a company – the first thing you need to know is whether it is a company registered under the Companies Act and has the right to take deposits. If not, they have no business taking public money. Even if they show proof that they are allowed to take deposits, it best to avoid organisations that take deposits are not NBFCs registered with RBI. This is because when a deposit-taking entity is regulated by RBI, you have a ready regulator to approach when in distress. In the case of companies under the Companies Act 2013, such redressal often goes to a court of law. Next, check the credit rating of the company. For a retail investor taking risks in options with a rating of below AA+ can be risky. If the company or LLP is unable to produce these proofs, it is best avoided.

Q. I am 23. I want to earn in the stock market. I am currently unemployed. My parents gave me ₹60,000. Where and how do I invest?

YUVRAJ

A. If you are new to investing, it is good to start at least a small sum in simple and good products like PPF. You can then learn a little more about money-investing by reading. You can consider reading books such as *Let's Talk Money* by Monika Halan and *You can be rich too: With Goal Based Investing* (P.V. Subramanyam and M. Pattabiraman) to know the basics of money and financial planning.

You can go to mutual fund websites to know the basics of mutual funds. Once you understand this a bit, you can then try to read about how stock markets work and how to understand a company's financials and business prospects. This by itself is a journey. If you want to do trading, it is best that you first understand the vagaries of the stock market before doing so.

Importantly, do not get too swayed by the 'easy money' talk that you will hear all around you, once you get into this world. Listen to audios or videos of market tips but know that – like any other journey – the financial journey also takes time to travel. There will be no short cuts that are sustainable.

Q. I am a salaried employee with take-home income of about ₹90,000 a month. I need to invest around ₹4 lakh in my wife's new business. I have invested around ₹8 lakh in mutual funds with a monthly SIP of ₹20,000 (current value ₹12 lakh). I have around ₹22 lakh in PF, where I can get loan against my contribution. I do not have much savings now. My mutual fund goal is long term only and presently, I do not have any short-term requirement from my mutual funds. Please suggest whether it is prudent to use my mutual fund corpus or take a loan from PF or take a loan from some commercial banks to fund my wife's new business.

V. ROHIT

A. This is a decision that you have to make because it is not so much a matter of numbers and more about your risk appetite and stage in life you are at. But we can help with some pointers. Ideally, it is good to use your own savings to fund new ventures than take a loan since it may take time before the business generates cash flows and you will have to pay the EMI until then.

You can even lend to the business as a loan and even get some interest out of it. This may make it more professional, unless you plan to invest as share capital or partner contribution (if it is a partnership firm).

If you decide to dip into your savings, PF (advance) is an option but it is available only for specific purposes such as education, wedding, buying land etc. and only if you have completed a certain number of years in the organisation. Check these first with your employer. There is also a limit (based on your contribution to PF) on how much you can withdraw. So, ensure you don't have a problem with it. Taking a loan can be the last resort. See if there are options specifically available for women-run small enterprises. And, make sure the business is viable enough to repay the loan. Let the loan repayment not come at the cost of stopping SIPs.

Q. I am a 21-year-old student. I am currently doing an internship with a stipend of ₹7,500 a month. I want to multiply the funds through investment. But I am very confused about investing, where to invest and how to start. Can you advise me?

RAMESH

A. Start investing in equity index mutual funds with underlying indices such as Nifty 50, Nifty Midcap 150 and Nifty 500. Start reading business newspapers and understanding companies and their numbers. You can then slowly create your own wish list of stocks and see how they perform. Listen to interviews by fund managers and follow blogs of experts such as Aswath Damodaran to understand how to value companies. This will take time and, please remember, the stock market is not a money-making machine even if social media influencers make you feel like it is. It can help build, as much as destroy, wealth.

(The adviser is Co-founder, Primeinvestor.in)

Readers can e-mail queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. The experts on personal finance will answer select queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit.

Bound to the house but still adding value

The insurance market has evolved and now provides term plans for homemakers, independent of breadwinners

SAIJA PRAVEEN CHOWDARY

Providers of the family often relentlessly shoulder the bulk of responsibilities that may even outlive them.

This is a good reason for term life insurance to be considered not only a prudent but also a non-negotiable investment for them. Simply put, when something as crucial as the family's future is at stake, the safety net should ideally be cast as wide as possible. However, until recently, limited options were available to effectively cater to the insurance needs of these breadwinners' non-earning but working partners at home – the homemakers.

Typically, protection products existed for this segment earlier as well in the form of joint life cover but they came with their share of conditions.

The coverage in these traditional plans did not do complete justice to the monumental value added by a homemaker through household work, childcare and more. Not to mention the dependence on the earning spouse meant that they could not independently opt for the plan. Last year, the Supreme Court's landmark judgment also noted that the notion of homemakers not adding any economic value is problematic and must be overcome.

The insurance market evolves as per consumer needs and societal progression, and thus, the recent introduction of independent term homemaker policies by multiple insurers marked a milestone in this evolution. Here's a deep dive into how these plans work and how they differ from the joint life cover policies.

Ensuring better coverage

Independent term plans have widened the scope of coverage for homemakers. In these plans, the sum assured of ₹50 lakh is exclusively available for homemakers, thereby ensuring sufficient coverage for their dependents. Not just this, one can also opt for additional riders such as accidental death benefit rider to ensure extra protection in these plans. Now, if we compare the coverage with joint life cover policies, the sum assured couldn't suffice to adequately insure both spouses. The homemakers could get coverage of only 50% of the total sum assured in joint life policies.

Further, the income multiplier would be applicable as per the earning husband's yearly income. Let's say the husband's annual income is ₹5 lakh and the multiplier applicable is 15 times the annual income. In this case, the policyholder's eligibility would be for a coverage of ₹75 lakh. Now, if he takes a cover of ₹50 lakh, the homemaker is left with ₹25 lakh coverage. Keeping the policies in the market as the benchmark, the coverage usually starts from ₹50 lakh cover as anything less than that is not enough to shield the dependents. Assuming further, if the husband ends up using the whole of ₹75 lakh cover, the homemaker would not be eligible for any coverage as per the rules. The protection is much more robust and dependable in independent homemaker term plans.

Flexible criteria

In joint life cover, the homemaker's eligibility was entirely dependent on the husband's income and his policy. To facilitate greater expansion, the eligibility criteria have been eased in independent term plans for homemakers. The plans can be purchased by buyers within the age bracket of 18-50 years. The conditions have been kept simple to make the plan more accessible and inclusive. Firstly, the policyholder should have an annual household income of ₹5 lakh, and secondly, she should be a graduate.

However, some policies just need a 10th or 12th pass qualification for aspirants to purchase the plan. These criteria have been simplified for non-earning women to easily opt for the plan and make sure their dependents are covered even in their absence.

No dependency

Unfortunately, dependency is a term that has long been associated with homemakers. However, when it comes to financial decisions, even earning women have been known to depend on the men of the family.

Homemakers have been an untapped segment for the insurance industry, and now, these plans aim to empower women consumers by completely eliminating this dependency.

With the introduction of these plans, the industry officially acknowledges the fact that term cover is as necessary for homemakers as it is for breadwinners

The policyholder no longer needs to depend on the husband's decision to buy the policy or on the income that he earns.

While the contribution made by the homemakers often doesn't get its due recognition, the fact is that their absence can severely impact the emotional as well as the financial infrastructure of a family.

With the introduction of these plans, the industry officially acknowledges the fact that term insurance is as necessary for homemakers as it is for breadwinners.

(The author is Head - Term Insurance, Policybazaar.com)

THINK INVESTOR: NEW FUND OFFERS

To invest or not to invest in NFOs

With offers flooding the market, taking the right decision is crucial

VENKATESH BANGARUSWAMY

You could be overwhelmed if you see the number of New Fund Offer (NFO) documents filed now with markets regulator SEBI for its approval. In this article, we discuss how to decide on whether to invest in an NFO.

Applying thought: There are several factors which must be considered before going for an NFO. • GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

Experience vs process

It is typical for us to explore new products and services. For instance, in eating out, it is highly likely you would want to visit a new restaurant rather than the one you went to the last time.

Investing is different. You accumulate your savings in mutual funds and fixed deposits so that you can consume new products and experience new services in the future; such as going on a world tour (experience) or buying a cottage by the seaside (material good).

Investing itself is not an experience, but a process to help achieve life goals. You must analyse NFOs in this context. It is typical of an industry to continually introduce new products, as demand for existing products may dip after a while. So, the motivation behind a company unveiling a new product may be to create additional demand, not to necessarily fulfil your existing needs.

The pricing of the product is another factor. New mutual funds are offered at a net asset value (NAV) of ₹10 per unit. Suppose an individual must choose between an existing fund with NAV of ₹50 and an NFO priced at ₹10, small wonder that he or she will choose the NFO, as it offers five times more units for the same amount. But that is not how you should make investment choices.

Gauge performance

The first step in the investment decision should be to choose a benchmark. In the portfolio management process, this is called as a policy benchmark. Eg, do you want a fund benchmarked to the Nifty 50 Index? Your choice of the benchmark should be geared towards achieving your goal without taking high risk. If you are saving to fund your child's college education, choosing a mid-cap fund may be risky, given that mid-caps are vulnerable to momentum crashes.

The second step is to select a fund based on the chosen benchmark. This is when you must decide whether to invest in an NFO.

The principle to adopt is as follows: are funds already available on your chosen benchmark? If yes, then you should prefer existing funds.

Here's why: Investing in an active fund is about generating alpha, ie the positive excess return a fund generates over an appropriate benchmark. So, choosing an active fund requires an enquiry into whether a fund can sustain alpha in the future, given that it has generated alpha in the past. That means analysing its performance. NFOs do not have a track record. Existing funds do. True, the absolute NAV of existing funds will be greater than the NAV of an NFO.

But you should be sensitive to the expected returns on investments, not the NAV. Only when existing funds are not available on your chosen benchmark should you consider an NFO.

Policy benchmarks don't matter when you invest surplus cash (not intended for any goal) in a mutual fund.

Your choice of a fund should depend on whether it offers attractive return for the associated risk. In such cases, choosing NFOs on new benchmarks could be meaningful, that too when you are uncomfortable trading stocks in the markets.

For goal-based portfolios, however, existing funds on policy benchmarks could be a better choice. This argument is not different from an active trader preferring stocks in the secondary market to initial public offers (IPOs); it is relatively easy to analyse stock trends from price charts than to read financial statements of companies making the IPO.

(The writer offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

TECH TRAIL: PRECIOUS METALS

Dollar rally hits gold, silver

B. KRISHNAKUMAR

The weakness in precious metals witnessed in July spilled over to the month of August as well. After a recovery in the early part of the month, precious metals lost sheen in the latter half of August.

The rally in the U.S. dollar and expectations of an aggressive interest rate increase by the U.S. Federal Reserve affected sentiment towards precious metals.

As a result, Comex gold fell 3.1% in August to close at $1,726.2 an ounce. Comex silver recorded a much steeper cut of 11.5% to settle at $17.88 an ounce.

In the domestic market, MCX gold futures fell 2.4% to ₹50,414 per 10 gm. MCX silver futures lost 10.6% to settle at ₹53,151 per kg.

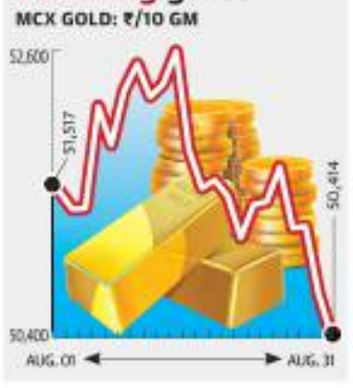
In line with expectations, the Comex gold price hit the target of $1,825-1,835 mentioned last month. After recording a high of $1,825 on August 10, the price turned weak in the latter half of August.

The short-term outlook for Comex gold remains weak and the price could drop to the $1,660-1,670 zone.

A break below the crucial support level of $1,645 will be a major sign of weakness and could push the price to further lows. Below $1,645, Comex gold could slide to $1,600-1,610. The price has to close above $1,775 to invalidate the weak outlook.

Similarly, Comex silver price, too, staged a sharp recovery in the early part of August but the recovery was not strong enough to push the price to the then mentioned target zone of $21.5-22.

Silver price recorded a high of $20.87 on August 15 and turned weak thereafter. The short-term outlook is negative, and the price could slide to the next support at $16.5-16.60. A move past $18.7 would invalidate the weak outlook.



In the domestic market, MCX gold price has been consolidating in a broad range of ₹49,900 to ₹52,600 in the past four months. The price now is near the lower end of this range. A break below ₹49,900 will be a sign of weakness and could push the price lower to ₹48,000-48,400. Only a move above ₹51,750 would invalidate the negative outlook for MCX gold.

MCX silver, too, ruled weak last month and has been in a steady downtrend for a while now.

The short-term outlook remains negative and a fall to ₹47,500-48,500 appears likely. Only a close above ₹55,400 would invalidate the negative outlook for MCX silver.

To summarise, the short-term outlook for precious metals is negative. Unless the price moves above the levels mentioned above, expect the recent weakness to persist in precious metals.

(The writer is a Chennai-based analyst / trader. This is not meant to be a trading or investment advice)

Bank fixed deposit rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%) Highest Slab	1-year tenure	3-year tenure	5-year tenure
SMALL FINANCE BANKS				
AU Small Finance Bank	6.90	5.35	6.90	6.90
Capital Small Finance Bank	6.60	6.20	6.20	6.20
Equitas Small Finance Bank	7.32	6.82	7.07	6.07
ESAF Small Finance Bank	7.25	5.50	5.75	5.25
Fincare Small Finance Bank	7.50	6.75	7.00	7.00
Jana Small Finance Bank	7.35	7.00	7.25	7.25
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	7.49	6.50	7.00	6.75
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	7.50	7.00	6.50	7.20
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	7.50	7.15	7.50	7.50
PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS				
Axis Bank	6.05	5.45	5.70	5.75
Bandhan Bank	7.00	7.00	7.00	5.60
CSB Bank	6.00	5.00	5.75	5.75
DBS Bank	6.50	5.75	6.25	6.25
DCB Bank	6.60	6.10	6.60	6.60
HDFC Bank	6.10	5.50	5.50	6.10
ICICI Bank	6.10	5.50	5.60	6.10
IDFC First Bank	6.90	5.75	6.50	6.50
IndusInd Bank	6.75	6.25	6.75	6.75
Jammu & Kashmir Bank	6.25	6.25	5.75	6.00
Karnataka Bank	6.20	6.20	5.65	5.65
Karur Vysya Bank	6.10	6.10	6.10	6.10
Kotak Mahindra Bank	6.10	5.75	6.00	6.00
Nainital Bank	5.60	5.55	5.60	5.60
RBL Bank	7.00	6.50	6.55	6.55
SBM Bank India	6.60	6.40	6.40	6.15
South Indian Bank	5.85	5.60	5.75	5.85
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	5.75	5.50	5.75	5.75
PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS				
Bank of Baroda	6.00	5.30	5.50	5.50
Bank of India	5.50	5.30	5.35	5.35
Bank of Maharashtra	5.50	5.40	5.40	5.40
Canara Bank	6.00	5.50	5.75	5.75
Indian Bank	5.75	5.45	5.75	5.65
Indian Overseas Bank	5.70	5.45	5.70	5.70
Punjab National Bank	6.10	5.50	5.60	5.75
Punjab & Sind Bank	5.80	5.65	5.75	5.75
State Bank of India	6.10	5.45	5.60	5.65
Union Bank of India	5.80	5.35	5.50	5.75
FOREIGN BANKS				
Citibank	3.50	2.75	3.50	3.50
Deutsche Bank	7.00	5.50	6.50	7.00
HSBC Bank	6.00	3.10	4.00	4.00

Home loan interest rates

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.) Upto 30 Lakh	Above 30 Lakh & upto 75 Lakh	Above 75 Lakh
	(in %)		
PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS			
State Bank of India	8.05-9.05	8.05-8.95	8.05-8.95
Bank of Baroda	7.95-9.45	7.95-9.45	7.95-9.70
Union Bank of India	7.90-9.65	7.90-9.85	7.90-9.85
Punjab National Bank	7.95-8.35	7.90-9.05	7.90-9.00
Bank of India	7.80-9.65	7.80-9.65	7.80-9.65
Canara Bank	8.05-12.85	8.05-12.85	8.05-12.85
UCO Bank	7.90-8.10	7.90-8.10	7.90-8.10
Bank of Maharashtra	7.80-9.70	7.80-9.85	7.80-9.95
Punjab and Sind Bank	7.90-9.00	7.90-9.00	7.90-9.00
Indian Overseas Bank	8.45-8.80	8.55-8.80	8.70-8.80
PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS			
Kotak Mahindra Bank	>=7.99	>=7.99	>=7.99
ICICI Bank	8.10-9.00	8.10-9.00	8.10-9.10
Axis Bank	8.10-13.00	8.10-13.00	8.10-8.55
HSBC Bank	7.35-8.20	7.35-8.20	7.35-8.20
South Indian Bank	8.75-11.50	8.75-11.50	8.75-11.50
Karur Vysya Bank	8.05-10.25	8.05-10.25	8.05-10.25
Karnataka Bank	7.96-9.21	7.96-9.21	7.96-9.31
Federal Bank	9.05-9.10	9.10-9.15	9.15-9.20
Dhanlaxmi Bank	8.35-9.50	8.35-9.50	8.35-9.50
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	7.95	7.95	7.95
Bandhan Bank	7.80-14.00	7.80-13.15	7.80-13.15
RBL Bank	10.80-12.50	9.20-9.60	9.20-9.50
CSB Bank	9.69	9.69	9.94
HOUSING FINANCE COMPANIES (HFCS)			
LIC Housing Finance	8.00-9.35	8.00-9.55	8.00-9.75
HDFC Ltd.	8.10-9.50	8.35-9.75	8.45-9.85
Bajaj Housing Finance	7.70 onwards	7.70 onwards	7.70 onwards
Tata Capital	>=8.10	>=8.10	>=8.10
PNB Housing Finance	7.99-16.75	7.99-16.75	8.10-11.20
GIC Housing Finance	>=8.20	>=8.20	>=8.20
Repco Home Finance	>=7.70	>=7.70	>=7.70
Indiabulls Housing	>=8.70	>=8.70	>=8.70
Aditya Birla Capital	8.00-12.50	8.00-12.50	8.00-12.50
ICICI Home Finance	>=9.20	>=9.20	>=9.20
Godrej Housing Finance	7.94-10.99	7.94-10.99	7.94-10.99
Home First Finance	8.00-18.00	8.00-18.00	8.00-18.00

Rates as on September 2 — Source: Paisabazaar.com

Chile votes on proposed Constitution

If approved, it will replace Pinochet-era charter and shift focus to indigenous rights, gender equality

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SANTIAGO

Chileans voted in a plebiscite on Sunday on whether to adopt a far-reaching new Constitution that would fundamentally change the South American country.

The proposed charter is intended to replace a Constitution imposed by the military dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet 41 years ago.

For months, opinion polls have shown a clear advantage for the rejection camp, but the difference has been narrowing, giving hope to the charter's supporters that they can pull off a victory.

"We are clearly in a situation in which the result will be close," said Marta Lagos, head of MORI, a local pollster. "The Chilean is a political animal who decides at the last minute."

The outcome will have a resounding impact on President Gabriel Boric, 36, who has been one of the main proponents of the new Constitution. Analysts say voters also likely view the vote as a referendum on Chile's youngest-ever President, whose popularity has plunged since taking office in March.

Big leap: A citizen casting a ballot during a referendum on a new Constitution in Santiago on Sunday. •REUTERS

Voting is mandatory in the plebiscite, which climaxes a three-year process that began when the country exploded in student-led street protests in 2019. The unrest was sparked by a hike in public transportation prices, but it quickly expanded into broader demands for greater equality and more social protections.

The following year, just under 80% of Chileans voted in favour of changing the Constitution that dates from the country's 1973-1990 military dictatorship led by Augusto Pinochet.

New convention

Then in 2021, they elected delegates to a constitutional convention. Amid the anti-establishment fervour of the time, Chileans largely chose people outside the traditional political establishment to draft the new Constitution. It was the first in the world to be written by a convention split equally between male and female delegates.

After months of work, delegates came up with a 178-page document with 388 Articles that, among other things, puts a focus on social issues and gender parity, enshrines rights for the country's Indigenous population and puts the environment and climate change centre stage in a country that is the world's top copper producer. It also introduces rights to free education, health care and housing.

The new Constitution would characterise Chile as a plurinational state, establish autonomous Indigenous territories and recognise a parallel justice system in those areas, although lawmakers would decide how far-reaching that would be.

In contrast, the current Constitution is a market-friendly document that favors the private sector over the state in aspects like education, pensions and health care. It also makes no reference to the country's Indigenous population, which makes up almost 13% of the country's 19 million people.

Hamas executes five Palestinians

REUTERS
GAZA

Gaza's ruling Hamas executed five Palestinians on Sunday, two of them on charges of espionage for Israel that dated back to 2015 and 2009, the Interior Ministry said.

The executions, by hanging or firing squad, were the first in the Palestinian territories since 2017. Past cases of capital punishment being carried out in Gaza have drawn criticism from rights groups.

The Ministry did not provide full names for any of the condemned men. It said three had been convicted of murder. The two convicted spies, aged 44 and 54, had given Israel information that led to the killing of Palestinians, it said. The Israeli Prime Minister's Office declined comment.

U.K. to learn name of new PM today

Queen will invite winner to form govt.

A file photo of Conservative leadership candidates Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak, left, during an event in London. •REUTERS

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
LONDON

The U.K. will get a new Prime Minister on Tuesday, with the Conservative Party leadership contest between Foreign Secretary Liz Truss and former Chancellor Rishi Sunak having concluded on Friday. Ms. Truss is expected to win a majority of the votes from over 1,60,000 Conservative members, unless the polls and bookmakers have consistently been off the mark.

The results of the contest will be announced at 12.30 p.m. local time (5 p.m. IST) on Monday. The new Prime Minister will replace Boris Johnson after Queen Elizabeth II invites the winner to form a new government on Tuesday, following Mr. Johnson's resignation .

Speaking to the BBC on Sunday morning, Ms. Truss said there would be an announcement about tackling "eye-watering" energy bills and long-term energy supply within a week of her hypothetical appointment as Prime Minister, but declined to provide details. "Well, I absolutely accept that we face very, very serious challenges, which will require immediate action," she said in response to a question about whether the U.K. was at a crisis point.

Ms. Truss, who reiterated her commitment to roll back National Insurance (i.e., social security) tax increases by the current Tory government, said that it was fair that people who pay more into the system (i.e, wealthier people) are benefited more from the policy.

"But to look at everything through the lens of redistribution, I believe is wrong. Because what I'm about is about growing the economy and growing the economy benefits everybody," she said, stressing that the rollback was needed because the government had said it would not raise these taxes, but had done so.

Mr. Sunak also spoke to the BBC on Sunday. While also declining to name the amount Britons would receive to help pay energy bills, Mr. Sunak provided some indication of how he would tackle the situation, pointing to his record as Chancellor – when he introduced a furlough scheme through which employers were supported in keeping employees on their payrolls.

Quizzed on whether he would run again (assuming he lost on Monday), Mr. Sunak did not rule it out, saying he would want to recover from this campaign and support the Conservative government in "whatever capacity".

Trump brands Biden 'enemy of the state'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WILKES BARRE

Donald Trump branded Joe Biden an "enemy of the state" on Saturday as he hit back at the U.S. President's assertion that the Republican and his supporters are undermining American democracy, and slammed last month's FBI raid of his Florida home.

Making his first public appearance since the raid, he told a rally in Pennsylvania that the search was a "travesty of justice" and warned it would produce "a backlash the likes of which nobody has ever seen." "He (Biden) is an enemy of the state... The enemy of the state is him".

Obama wins Emmy for narrating documentary

Boseman wins award posthumously

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LOS ANGELES

Former U.S. President Barack Obama was awarded an Emmy for narrating his Netflix documentary series *Our Great National Parks*, the Television Academy announced on Saturday.

Mr. Obama had already won a pair of Grammy Awards – for audio versions of his memoirs *The Audacity of Hope* and *Dreams from My Father* – so he now only needs an Oscar and a Tony to complete the estimable EGOT (referring to those who have won an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar, and a Tony). To date, 17 people have done it.

Barack Obama

The late Chadwick Boseman also won an Emmy for his voice work on Saturday. The *Black Panther* actor won for outstanding character voiceover for the Disney+ and Marvel Studios animated show *What If...?*

(With AP inputs)

Ukraine Prime Minister visits Berlin, seeks more weapons

Germany will continue to stand by Kyiv's side: Steinmeier

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BERLIN

Ukraine Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal brought Kyiv's plea for more weapons to Germany on Sunday, saying his country needed additional help in its battle against Russia.

Mr. Shmyhal is the first high-level Ukrainian official to visit Germany in months, in a sign of eased tensions between Kyiv and Berlin after a rocky patch.

The first stop on his trip was a meeting with President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, where Mr. Shmyhal "discussed the military situation, strengthening sanctions and the need to provide weapons for Ukraine," he said on Twitter.

Mr. Shmyhal, who will meet Chancellor Olaf Scholz later Sunday, also thanked Germany "for solidarity with Ukrainians and support".

Germany will "continue to stand reliably by Ukraine's side," Mr. Steinmeier reassured Mr. Shmyhal, according to the German President's spokeswoman.

The Ukrainian PM's visit marked a sharp change in tone, after a row erupted in April when Kyiv rebuffed Mr. Steinmeier's offer to travel to Ukraine.

Mr. Steinmeier, a former Foreign Minister from Mr. Scholz's Social Democratic Party (SPD), had been shunned over his years-long detente policy towards Moscow – something which he has admitted was a mistake following the outbreak of war.

The SPD has historically championed close ties with Russia, born out of the "Ostpolitik" policy of rapprochement and dialogue with the then Soviet Union, devised by former SPD Chancellor Willy Brandt in the 1970s.

SPORT

India women face uphill task

They will strive to remain in Division-A

BASKETBALL

K. KEERTHIVASAN
BENGALURU

There is no hiding the fact that India is the lowest-ranked team, at 52, among the eight countries taking part in Division-A of the FIBA Asian women's under-18 basketball championship to be held at the Sree Kanteerava Indoor Stadium here from September 5 to 11.

While the top four teams from here will qualify for the FIBA under-19 World Cup to be held in Madrid, India will hope against hope to finish in the top eight and remain in Division-A.

Getting ready: The Korean team training on Sunday. •SUDHAKARA JAIN

Best in business

"The cream of world basketball and not just Asian basketball is here. It will be a big challenge for India. Six teams are world-class teams. Between Taipei and Indonesia, Taipei is stronger," said Veselin Matic, head coach of the Indian men's team, after watching the Chinese and Korean teams practise here on Sunday.

"The only way to remain in Division-A is to beat Indonesia."

According to the Serb, the Indian team has to shrug off the 'lack of aggression' mentality if it has to improve.

Arnika Patil, head coach of the Indian women's team here, knows how uphill is the task ahead.

Excited and anxious

"The players are excited and there is a lot of anxiety as well. We had a camp for 45-60 days here. We didn't have much exposure due to COVID-19, but we will do our best," she said.

Anitha Paul Durai, assistant coach and a veteran of nine Asian women's championships, said the best aspect of the team is that all the 12 players are equally good. "We have two extraordinary players in Sathya Krishnamurthi and Manmeet Kaur," she said.

The groupings: Division-A: Group-A: India, Australia, New Zealand, Korea.

B: China, Japan, Taipei & Indonesia.

Salento wins Race2win.com Deccan Colts Championship Stakes

HYDERABAD: Trainer Arjun Manglorkar's Salento, ridden by Antony Raj S, won the Race2win.com Deccan Colts Championship Stakes, the main attraction of Sunday's (Sept. 4) races here. The winner is owned by M/s. Arun Alagappan Racing LLP, M/s. Rapar's Galloping Stars LLP, Mr. Joydeep Datta Gupta & Mr. Rajan Aggarwal.

Antony Raj kept Salento calmly in sixth position till the bend and as they came into the straight, he manoeuvred his way to take charge and snatched the verdict from Ashoka.

This son of Speaking Of Which helped Manglorkar complete a hat-trick of Colts Championship. His previous winners were Impavid (2019) and Kensington (2021).

1. HUSSAIN SAGAR CUP (1,400m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): **QUALITY WARRIOR** (B.R. Kumar) 1, The Akhanda (Ashad Asbar) 2, Philanthropist (Kiran Naidu) 3 and 4. Sweet Meloy (Surya Prakash) 4. 3-1/4, 4-3/4 and 1. 1m, 27.83s. ₹60 (w), 14, 10 and 13 (p). SHP: 62, THP: 33, SHW: 18 and 10, FP: 180, Q: 29, Tanala: 530. Favourite: The Akhanda. Owners: Mr. L.D'Silva, Mr. Syed Nawaz Hussain, Mr. E. Anoop Kumar Reddy, Mr. Abhimanyu Vinod Sigtia, Mrs. Nirupama Chodagam. Trainer: L. D'Silva.

NOTE: Royal Pal (Gaurav Singh up) reared up awkwardly soon after the start and did not jump out of the gates.

2. MOUNT PLEASANT PLATE (DIV. I) (1,200m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II): **THE THUNDER** (Ashad Asbar) 1, Wind Sprite (Afroz Khan) 2, Sergeant Reckless (Kiran Naidu) 3 and City Cruise (Nakhat Singh) 4. Not run: Palladium. 1-1/2, 3/4 and 1. 1m, 14.93s. ₹13 (w), 10, 17 and 13 (p). SHP: 43, THP: 44, SHW: 11 and 43, FP: 60, Q: 56, Tanala: 145. Favourite: The Thunder. Owner: Mr. B.E. Vasanth Kumar. Trainer: M. Srinivas Reddy.

3. HYDERABAD CITY POLICE COMMISSIONER'S CUP (DIV. II) (1,200m), rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): **FULL VOLUME** (Suraj Narredu) 1, Amyra (Santosh Raj) 2, Top In Class (Kuldeep Singh) 3 and Makhtoob (C.S. Jodha) 4. 1m, 13.35s. ₹27 (w), 12, 22 and 19 (p). SHP: 59, THP: 45, SHW: 19 and 35, FP: 157, Q: 114, Tanala: 1,530. Favourite: N R I Touch. Owner: Mr. Teja Gollapudi. Trainer: Laxman Singh.

Rewarding a champion: Salento's trainer Arjun Mangalorkar, right, receiving the winner's trophy from Y. Gopi Rao, MD, Razor Gaming Private Limited. •G. RAMAKRISHNA

4. MAHABUBNAGAR PLATE (1,200m), 5-y-o & upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): **BEDFORD** (Santosh Raj) 1, Linewiler (Kiran Naidu) 2, N R I Blue (Koushik) 3 and Theo's Choice (P. Sai Kumar) 4. 5, 2 and 3/4. 1m, 13.81s. ₹130 (w), 29, 19 and 97 (p). SHP: 116, THP: 187, SHW: 54 and 27, FP: 1,764, Q: 1,303, Tanala: 25,998. Favourite: Star Racer. Owners: Mr. Teegala Vijender Reddy & Mr. Narendra Vithaldas Shah. Trainer: N. Rawal.

5. HYDERABAD CITY POLICE COMMISSIONER'S CUP (DIV. I) (1,200m), 5-y-o & upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II): **RED SNAPER** (Afroz Khan) 1, N R I Sun (Koushik) 2, Mark My Day (Nakhat Singh) 3 and Four One Four (Akshay Kumar) 4. 3/4, 3/4 and 2. 1m, 14.02s. ₹166 (w), 18, 25 and 13 (p). SHP: 70, THP: 68, SHW: 43 and 48, FP: 2,303, Q: 919, Tanala: 5,018. Favourite: Mark My Day. Owners: Ms. Meka Ahalya & Mrs. Rajini Meka. Trainer: L. D'Silva.

6. RACE2WIN.COM DECCAN COLTS CHAMPIONSHIP STAKES (GR. III) (1,600M), (TERMS) **COLTS & GELDINGS: SALENTO (SPEAKING OF WHICH-PENINSULA) (ANTONY RAJ S)** 1, Ashoka (Gusto-Epsilon Orionis) (P. Trevor) 2, Ahead Of My Time (A. Sandesh) 3 and Ashwa Yudhvir (Ampere-Je Suis) (Suraj Narredu) 4. 1/2, 3 and 2-1/4. 1m, 38.83s. ₹88 (w), 23, 13 and 14 (p). SHP: 40, THP: 59, SHW: 46 and 17, FP: 342, Q: 179, Tanala: 1,414. Favourite: Ahead Of My Time. Owners: M/s. Arun Alagappan Racing LLP, M/s. Rapar's Galloping Stars LLP., Mr. Joydeep Datta Gupta & Mr. Rajan Agarwal. Trainer: Arjun Manglorkar.

7. MOUNT PLEASANT PLATE (DIV. II) (1,200m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II): **STRAUSS** (Suraj Narredu) 1, Dyanoosh (B.R. Kumar) 2, Temptations (Ajeeth Kumar) 3 and Avancia (A.A. Vikrant) 4. Not run: True Marshal. 2-1/4, 2 and 2. 1m, 14.13s. ₹14 (w), 12, 16 and 15 (p). SHP: 37, THP: 42, SHW: 11 and 37, FP: 54, Q: 56, Tanala: 108. Favourite: Strauss. Owner: Miss. Ameeta Mehra. Trainer: K.S.V. Prasad Raju.

Jackpot: 70%: ₹2,59,477 (2 tkts.) & 30%: 74, 136 (3 tkts.).
Mini Jackpot: (i) 16, 536 (4 tkts.), (ii) 43,607 (2 tkts.).
Treble : (i) 887 (80 tkts.), (ii) 3,603 (35 tkts.).

Falcon Edge primed to complete hat-trick

HYDERABAD: The four-year-old colt Falcon Edge, who has won two races this season, maintains his winning form and should score a hat-trick in the Totaram's Cup, the main event of Monday's (Sept. 5) races.

1 BELAGER PLATE (1,400m) (Terms), 3-y-o & upward (Cat. II), 1.30 p.m.: 1. Peaky Blinders (6) Abhay Singh 60, 2. Watch My Stride (1) Akshay Kumar 60, 3. Stunning Force (3) Suraj Narredu 58, 4. Trump Star (5) A.A. Vikrant 58, 5. Soloist (4) M. Madhu Babu 56.5, 6. Bandit King (2) Kiran Naidu 55 and 7. Staridar (7) P. Sai Kumar 55.

1. WATCH MY STRIDES,
2. PEAKY BLINDERS,
3. STUNNING FORCE

2 CHAITANYA CHAKRAM PLATE (1,400m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II), 2.05: 1. Desert Sultan (9) A.A. Vikrant 56, 2. Mr. Perfect (2) G. Naresh 56, 3. Raisina Hill (8) Kiran Naidu 56, 4. Resurgence (6) Surya Prakash 56, 5. Samrat (10) Mohit Singh 56, 6. Shah Of Iran (3) P. Sai Kumar 56, 7. Humanitarian (5) Suraj Narredu 54.5, 8. Mountain Rose (4) Gaurav Singh 54.5, 9. Role Model (1) Nakhat Singh 54.5 and 10. The Thriller (7) Ashad Asbar 54.5.

1. RESURGENCE, 2. HUMANITARIAN, 3. THE THRILLER

3 MAKALU PLATE (1,600m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2.40: 1. Southern Act (7) Md. Ismail 60, 2. Best Buddy (3) Nakhat Singh 59.5, 3. Aiza (4) A.A. Vikrant 54, 4. Team Player (2) Gaurav Singh 53, 5. Exponent (6) Surya Prakash 51.5, 6. Glimmer Of Hope (1) P. Vikram 51.5 and 7. Fly Tothe Stars (5) Afroz Khan 51.

1. TEAM PLAYER,
2. SOUTHERN ACT,
3. AIZA

4 ASAF JAH VII MEMORIAL CUP (2,000m), rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 3.15: 1. Skipton (4) Suraj Narredu 60, 2. Icicle (7) A.A. Vikrant 55.5, 3. Just Incredible (2) Kuldeep Singh 53, 4. Wallop And Gallop (5) Ajeeth Kumar 52, 5. Miss Marvellous (6) B. Nikhil 51.5, 6. Princess Daka (3) Akshay Kumar 51 and 7. Bold Bidding (1) Abhay Singh 50.5.

1. BOLD BIDDING, 2. PRINCESS DAKA, 3. ICICLE

5 TOTARAM'S CUP (1,800m), rated 60 to 85 (Cat. II), 3.50: 1. Falcon Edge (4) Akshay Kumar 60, 2. Kesariya Balam (3) M. Madhu Babu 56, 3. Saffron Art (2) Kiran Naidu 55, 4. Fire Power (1) Ajeeth Kumar 54.5, 5. House Of Diamonds (6) Abhay Singh 53 and 6. Ashwa Raudee (5) D.S. Deora 51.

1. FALCON EDGE,
2. ASHWA RAUDEE

6 GREEN HAVEN PLATE (1,200m), rated up to 25 (Cat. III), 4.25: 1. Flamingo Fame (10) Suraj Narredu 60, 2. My Master (3) Gaurav Singh 60, 3. Neffereti (2) P. Vikram 58.5, 4. Reigning Queen (4) Ajeeth Kumar 58.5, 5. Horse O' War (5) G. Naresh 57.5, 6. Arba Wahed Arba (8) Afroz Khan 57, 7. Good Tidings (9) Akshay Kumar 56, 8. Red River (6) Nakhat Singh 56, 9. Sea Of Class (7) Kuldeep Singh 55.5 and 10. Tales Of A Legend (1) Kiran Naidu 55.

1. FLAMINGO FAME,
2. GOOD TIDINGS, 3. RED RIVER

7 MANCHERIAL PLATE (1,200m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 5.00: 1. The Sensation (1) Ashad Asbar 60, 2. Black Onyx (5) D.S. Deora 58.5, 3. Cosmico (9) B. Nikhil 57.5, 4. Essential (10) Suraj Narredu 57.5, 5. Hot Seat (6) Akshay Kumar 57, 6. Salisbury (8) Afroz Khan 55.5, 7. Battle Ready (7) Rafique Sk. 51, 8. Lightning Fairy (2) Khurshad Alam 51, 9. Sweet Talk (4) P. Sai Kumar 51 and 10. Aarya (3) P. Vikram 50.5.

1. THE SENSATION,
2. BLACK ONYX, 3. HOT SEAT

Day's Best: **FALCON EDGE**
Jackpot: 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7
Mini Jackpot: (i) 1, 2, 3 & 4. (ii) 4, 5, 6 & 7.
Treble: (i) 2, 3 & 4, (ii) 5, 6 & 7.
Tanala: All races.

Martin is Odisha's hero

The team will meet BFC in last eight

DURAND CUP

SPORTS BUREAU

Pedro Martin, who came in as a late substitute, netted the all-important goal to help Odisha FC beat Army Green 1-0 in the concluding Group D league match of the 131st Durand Cup football tournament in Guwahati on Sunday.

The win saw Odisha FC top the league table with an all-win record and tally 12 points from four matches. Kerala Blasters, which garnered seven points, was the group runner-up and also progressed to the knock-out stage (quarterfinals).

According to the quarterfinal line-up announced by the organiser, Odisha will meet Group A runner-up Bengaluru FC, while Blasters take on Group A topper Mohammedan Sporting SC. The final positions of groups B and C will be decided on Monday.

The first half was barren as the Army outfit did not seem to have the requisite arsenal to overwhelm the well-knit defence of Odisha.

The match livened up in the final quarter after Odisha coach Josep Gombau brought in some substitutions to spruce up the attack.

This set up the Odisha goal as Martin was released unmarked inside the Army box with a defence-splitting pass from substitute Paul Ramfangzauva and the former finished with a powerful grounder.

The result:

Army Green 0 lost to Odisha FC 1 (Martin 83).

Services, Delhi and Haryana bag titles

WRESTLING

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

Services, with 144 points, won the team title in the Greco-Roman category at the National u-23 wrestling championship which concluded at the Rajiv Gandhi indoor stadium here on Sunday.

Delhi (192 points) topped the men's freestyle table while Haryana (225 points) won the honours in the women's section.

The results (finals):

Men: Greco-Roman: 63kg: Kewal (HP) bt Govind (Mah) by technical superiority. **77kg:** Sachin (Chd) bt Deepak (SSCB) by points. **87kg:** Sushant (SSCB) bt Ankit (Chd) by tech sup.

Freestyle: 70kg: Sunny (Del) bt Rahul (Chd) by tech sup. **86kg:** Sandeep (Pun) bt Jointy (UP) by points.

Women: 55kg: Juli (UP) bt Aarti (Har) by fall.

62kg: Shefali (Har) bt Loveleen (Pun) by points. **76kg:** Priyanka (Har) bt Kartika (HP) by tech sup.

Team championships:

Men: Greco-Roman: 1. SSCB (144 pts), 2. Chandigarh (135), 3. Maharashtra (135).

Freestyle: Men: 1. Delhi (192 pts), 2. Haryana (161), 3. UP (131).

Women: 1. Haryana (225 points), 2. UP (152), 3. Maharashtra (111).

Resilient Pakistan aces the chase in final over thriller

The 73-run third-wicket stand between Rizwan and Nawaz tilts the balance in favour of Babar's men; Kohli comes good for India again

ASIA CUP

ASHWIN ACHAL
DUBAI

Pakistan overcame a few tense moments to record a five-wicket win over India in their Asia Cup Super 4 contest at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium here on Sunday.

Chasing 182, Pakistan reached home with one ball to spare. A 73-run third-wicket stand between Mohammad Rizwan (71, 51b, 6x4, 2x6) and Mohammad Nawaz (42, 20b, 6x4, 2x6) put Pakistan on the right track. Southpaw Nawaz, promoted up the order to tackle leg-spinners Ravi Bishnoi and Yuzvendra Chahal, smacked it around.

Pakistan was in cruise control when the duo was in action. It took a clever slower ball from Bhuvneshwar Kumar to remove Nawaz. In the next over, India was back in the contest after Rizwan holed out to long-off.

The 18th over, bowled by Bishnoi, proved to be dramatic. A wide call from the umpire was reviewed by India, and replays showed the faintest of touches. The third umpire stuck to the wide call, allowing Asif Ali to bat on.

The very next ball, Asif lobbed the simplest of catches to short third-man fielder Arshdeep Singh, who inexplicably spilled it.

The drop proved to be costly, as Asif hit a six and a four in the next over to effectively the seal the contest. Arshdeep returned to bowl the last over, with Pakistan needing seven to win. He managed to trap Asif leg-before, but it was too little too late.

Virat Kohli, who was seen clutching his hamstring, left the field after the PowerPlay.

After being put in to bat, India reached a good score. Openers K.L. Rahul (28, 20b, 1x4, 2x6) and Rohit Sharma (28, 16b, 3x4, 2x6) gave India a quick start, putting on 54 runs in 5.1 overs.

Kohli (60, 44b, 4x4, 1x6) brought up his second successive fifty. Rahul struggled with his strike rate in the previous outing, but this time around, he took a more aggressive approach. In the third over, Rahul lofted pacer Naseem Shah over cover for a six.

A few deliveries later, Rahul played a remarkable helicopter shot, sending the ball straight and onto the sightscreen. Rahul perished to Shadab Khan, mishitting a googly to long-on.

A front-front pull off fast bowler Haris Rauf over cow corner was the highlight of Rohit's stint.

Rohit then skied a slower ball from Rauf, between cover and point. Fakhar Zaman, at point, nearly made a mess of the chance by colliding with Khushdil Shah, but the latter kept his cool to latch on. It was a forgettable night in the field for Zaman, who conceded two fours – including a catch – in the last two deliveries of the Indian innings. Kohli kept the scoreboard ticking by placing his shots in the gaps and running hard. He reached his fifty in style, whipping an overpitched ball from Mohammad Hasnain into the mid-wicket stand.

Suryakumar Yadav, the star of the Hong Kong outing, started with a cut shot which raced to the fence. A top edge, however, ended Suryakumar's innings short on 13. Rishabh Pant (14, 12b, 2x4) did not make much impact with the bat.

Power Play: Kohli's innings was trumped by Nawaz's all-round display in Sunday's blockbuster. • AP

SCOREBOARD

INDIA

K.L. Rahul c Nawaz b Shadab 28 *(20b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Rohit Sharma c Khushdil b Rauf 28 *(16b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Virat Kohli run out 60 *(44b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Suryakumar Yadav c Asif b Nawaz 13 *(10b, 2x4)*, Rishabh Pant c Asif b Shadab 14 *(12b, 2x4)*, Hardik Pandya c Nawaz b Hasnain 0 *(2b)*, Deepak Hooda c Nawaz b Naseem 16 *(14b, 2x4)*, Bhuvneshwar Kumar (not out) 0 *(0b)*, Ravi Bishnoi (not out) 8 *(2b, 2x4)*; Extras (b-4, w-10): 14; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 181.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-54 (Rohit, 5.1 overs), 2-62 (Rahul, 6.1), 3-91 (Suryakumar, 9.4), 4-126 (Pant, 13.5), 5-131 (Hardik, 14.4), 6-168 (Hooda, 18.4), 7-173 (Kohli, 19.4)

PAKISTAN BOWLING

Naseem 4-0-45-1, Hasnain 4-0-38-1, Rauf 4-0-38-1, Nawaz 4-0-25-1, Shadab 4-0-31-2.

PAKISTAN

Mohammad Rizwan c Suryakumar b Hardik 71 *(51b, 6x4, 2x6)*, Babar Azam c Rohit b Bishnoi 14 *(10b, 2x4)*, Fakhar Zaman c Kohli b Chahal 15 *(18b, 2x4)*, Mohammad Nawaz c Hooda b Bhuvneshwar 42 *(20b, 6x4, 2x6)*, Khushdil Shah (not out) 14 *(11b, 1x4)*, Asif Ali lbw b Arshdeep 16 *(8b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Iftikhar Ahmed (not out) 2 *(1b)*; Extras (lb-2, w-6): 8; Total (for five wkts. in 19.5 overs): 182.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-22 (Babar, 3.4), 2-63 (Zaman, 8.4), 3-136 (Nawaz, 15.3), 4-147 (Rizwan, 16.5), 5-180 (Asif, 19.4).

INDIA BOWLING

Bhuvneshwar 4-0-40-1, Arshdeep 3.5-0-27-1, Bishnoi 4-0-26-1, Hardik 4-0-44-1, Chahal 4-0-43-1.

Toss: Pakistan; **MoM:** Nawaz.

Rohit lauds Rizwan and Nawaz

SPORTS REPORTER
DUBAI

India captain Rohit Sharma lauded the opposition batters after Pakistan beat India by five wickets in a last-over thriller in a Super 4 match of the Asia Cup on Sunday.

"It's a high-pressure game and you've got to be at it every time. A game like that can take a lot. We were calm even when there was a partnership between Rizwan and Nawaz. But that partnership obviously went a little long and they batted brilliantly," said Rohit at the post-match presentation.

"Games like this can bring the best out of them if they deliver. These are the games that can make them. They've done it in the past. There's class in the other team as well. And we're not surprised by that," said the India skipper.

About Kohli, Rohit said: "Virat's form is brilliant. Every batter, especially Virat, helped us get to that score."

Turning point

Pakistan captain Babar Azam explained the rationale behind Nawaz's promotion.

"The Rizwan-Nawaz partnership was the turning point. I had a hunch Nawaz would be the key against their two leg-spinners," said Babar.

Tilak Varma lights up the day with fluent knock

His century on India-A debut gives hosts a 171-run lead; Kuldeep impresses on a tough track

What a start! Tilak's stroke-filled innings was one of the highlights of the match. • K. MURALI KUMAR

NZ-A IN INDIA

P.K. AJITH KUMAR
BENGALURU

Only one result looked likely when the final day of the first 'Test' between India-A and New Zealand-A got underway on an overcast Sunday morning. The match indeed ended in a draw at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, but not before a teenaged batter scored a sparkling, maiden First Class hundred and an experienced wrist-spinner came up with a fine spell that should make him feel better.

The captains agreed to call off the match when 15 overs were remaining. The visitors had made 133 for four in their second innings, after conceding a lead of 171.

Improvement

Two of those wickets were claimed by Kuldeep Yadav, who finished with two for 38 from 22 overs, a significant improvement from one for 119 from 34 overs in the first. The left-arm wrist-spinner bowled well on a track that didn't offer much.

He ended the 51-run partnership for the opening wicket, making Chad Bowes edge to slip. The other opener, Rachin Ravindra, scored 40 (84b, 6x4) before he was cleaned up by left-arm seamer Yash Dayal. New Zealand-A's first-innings hero Joe Carter didn't last long; he fished outside the off-stump against the other left-arm pacer Arzan Nagwaswalla and was caught behind for 14.

Earlier, the host resumed at 492 for four with both the overnight batters, Rajat Patidar and Tilak Varma, in sight of personal milestones. Patidar, though, failed to convert his hundred on India-A debut into a double. He could add just six more - 176 (256b, 411min, 14x4, 4x6) – before seamer Logan van Beek had him caught at deep square-leg. The fifth-wicket partnership was worth 186.

Tilak, also making his debut, completed his hundred, however, with a splendid cut off van Beek. It was in fact his maiden First Class hundred, which came in only his fifth match. The stroke-filled knock (121, 183b, 259m, 9x4, 6x6) from the 19-year-old was, in fact, one of the highlights of the match.

The scores: New Zealand-A — 1st innings: 400.

India-A — 1st innings: Priyank Panchal c O'Donnell b Ravindra 47, Abhimanyu Easwaran b Rippon 132, Ruturaj Gaikwad st Fletcher b Ravindra 21, Rajat Patidar c Walker b van Beek 176, Sarfaraz Khan c Fletcher b Duffy 36, Tilak Varma c Walker b Solia 121, K.S. Bharat (not out) 23, Kuldeep Yadav (not out) 8; Extras (b-3, lb-3, w-1) 7; Total (for six wkts. decl. in 143 overs): 571.

Fall of wickets: 1-123, 2-157, 3-261, 4-325, 5-511.

New Zealand-A bowling: Duffy 27-6-90-1, van Beek 26-2-102-1, Solia 17-1-73-1, Ravindra 32-3-112-2, Rippon 22-1-101-1, Walker 16-0-81-0, O'Donnell 3-0-6-0.

New Zealand-A — 2nd innings: Chad Bowes c Ruturaj b Kuldeep 24, Rachin Ravindra b Dayal 40, Joe Carter c Bharat b Nagwaswalla 14, Mark Chapman lbw b Kuldeep 23, Cam Fletcher (not out) 14, Sean Solia (not out) 10; Extras (lb-1, nb-7): 8; Total (for four wkts. in 61 overs): 133.

Fall of wickets: 1-51, 2-75, 3-100, 4-111.

India-A bowling: Mukesh 10-3-21-0, Nagwaswalla 11-2-26-1, Kuldeep 22-6-38-2, Sarfaraz 6-0-23-0, Dayal 10-4-19-1, Tilak 2-0-5-0.

Reigning supreme

Fantastic finish: Odisha Juggernauts edged out Telugu Yoddhas 46-45 in an exciting final of the inaugural edition of Ultimate Kho Kho in Pune on Sunday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Savaj is here!

Let's roar: Savaj, the mascot for the 36th National Games to be held in Gujarat from Sept. 27, was unveiled by Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Ahmedabad on Sunday. • VIJAY SONEJI

Nadal makes it 18-0 against Gasquet

Swiatek overcomes Davis; Alcaraz registers 47th win of the season

U.S. OPEN

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
NEW YORK

Rafael Nadal defeated close friend Richard Gasquet for the 18th time to reach the US Open fourth round on Saturday as World No. 1 Iga Swiatek made the last 16 for a second successive year.

Four-time champion Nadal took his record over Gasquet to a perfect 18-0 with a 6-0, 6-1, 7-5 victory to stay on course for a 23rd Grand Slam title.

Nadal has now won 34 straight sets against Frenchman Gasquet who he first played as a junior.

Next up is 22nd seed Frances Tiafoe for a place in the quarterfinals.

Tiafoe made the last 16 for a third successive year by seeing off Argentina's Diego Schwartzman 7-6(7), 6-4, 6-4.

Carlos Alcaraz, claimed a season-leading 47th win.

The 19-year-old third seed defeated Jenson Brooksby of the United States 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 on the back of 46 winners.

In red-hot form: Alcaraz was at his marauding best against Brooksby. • AFP

Alcaraz, a quarterfinalist in 2021, managed to break one of his tennis shoes as he slid to reach a ball mid-match.

"It's the third time that I have done this. As you can see, I do a lot of sliding," he said.

Alcaraz next faces 2014 champion Marin Cilic, who fired 26 aces and 74 winners in total past Britain's Dan Evans in a 7-6(11), 6-7(3), 6-2, 7-5 win.

World No. 1 Swiatek downed unseeded Lauren Davis 6-3, 6-4, reeling off five successive games in the second set.

THE RESULTS

Fourth round: Men: 13-Berrettini (Ita) bt Davidovich Fokina (Esp) 3-6, 7-6(2), 6-3, 4-6, 6-2; **Third round: Men:** 11-Sinner (Ita) bt Nakashima (USA) 3-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-2; 15-Cilic (Cro) bt 20-Evans (GBr) 7-6(11), 6-7(3), 6-2, 7-5; 3-Alcaraz (Esp) bt Brooksby (USA) 6-3, 6-3, 6-3; 7-Norrie (GBr) bt 28-Rune (Den) 7-5, 6-4, 6-1; 9-Rublev (Rus) bt 19-Shapovalov (Can) 6-4, 2-6, 6-7(3), 6-4, 7-6 (10-7); 22-Tiafoe (USA) bt 14-Schwartzman (Arg) 7-6(7), 6-4, 6-4; 2-Nadal (Esp) bt Gasquet (Fra) 6-0, 6-1, 7-5.
Women: 1-Swiatek (Pol) bt Davis (USA) 6-3, 6-4; 8-Pegula (USA) bt Yue (Chn) 6-2, 6-7(6), 6-0; 26-Azarenka (Blr) bt Martic (Cro) 6-3, 6-0; 22-Pliskova (Cze) bt 13-Bencic (Sui) 5-7, 6-4, 6-3; 19-Collins (USA) bt Cornet (Fra) 6-4, 7-6(9); 6-Sabalenka (Blr) bt Burel (Fra) 6-0, 6-2.

United outguns Arsenal in exciting clash

Rashford stars with a brace; Barcelona rides its luck before blanking Sevilla

EURO LEAGUES

AGENCIES
MANCHESTER

Marcus Rashford scored twice as Manchester United made it four wins in a row and ended Arsenal's perfect start to the Premier League season with a 3-1 victory at Old Trafford on Sunday.

Gabriel Martinelli looked to have given Arsenal a 12th-minute lead after finishing off a swift break but the effort was disallowed following a VAR review.

Martinelli forced two saves out of United keeper David De Gea as the visitors began to dominate but it was the home side which drew first blood through debutant Antony.

Cool finish

The Brazilian winger, signed from Ajax last week, was found on the right by Rashford and coolly drifted a shot into the far bottom corner.

Arsenal deservedly drew level when the outstanding Martin Odegaard threaded a ball towards Gabriel Jesus in the box and after a challenge by Raphael Varane the ball fell to Bukayo Saka who slotted home.

Two goal hero: Rashford, centre, slots in United's second against Arsenal. • AP

Superb through ball

United restored its advantage in the 66th minute, however, when Bruno Fernandes found Rashford with a superb through ball and the England striker beat the advancing Aaron Ramsdale.

It was another swift counter that led to United's third with Christian Erkisen breaking clear and slipping the ball across to Rashford for a simple finish.

Robert Lewandowski scored again as Barcelona defeated Sevilla 3-0 in La Liga on Saturday.

Barcelona rode its lucky early on at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan as Marc-Andre ter Stegen denied Ivan Rakitic and Youssef En-Nesyri before the visitors struck against the run of play.

Raphinha headed in the rebound after Lewandowski's dinked effort was cleared off the line, but the Poland star didn't need long to get on the scoresheet himself.

Lewandowski controlled a flighted pass from Jules Kounde on his chest and volleyed past Bono for his fifth league goal in four appearances. Eric Garcia tapped in Barcelona's third five minutes after half-time.

The results: Premier League: Brighton 5 (Thomas 10-og, Caicedo 15, Trossard 64, Mac Allister 71-pen, 90) bt Leicester 2 (Iheanacho 1, Daka 33); Manchester United 3 (Antony 35, Rashford 66, 75) bt Arsenal 1 (Saka 60).

La Liga: Osasuna 2 (Oroz 54, Garcia 90) bt Rayo Vallecano 1 (Lejeune 75); Athletic Bilbao 0 lost to Espanyol 1 (Braithwaite 83).**On Saturday: La Liga:** Sevilla 0 lost to Barcelona 3 (Raphinha 21, Lewandowski 36, Garcia 50).

Serie A: Lazio 1 (Zaccagni 4) lost to Napoli 2 (Kim 38, Kvaratskhelia 61).

LIVE TELECAST

Durand Cup: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Voot Select, 3 & 6 p.m.
US Open: Sony Ten 2, Six (SD & HD) & LIV, 8.30 p.m. onwards
Serie A: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Voot Select, 10 p.m. & 12.15 a.m. (Tuesday)
La Liga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Voot Select, 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

IN BRIEF

Fourth straight victory for Bagnaia

MISANO ADRIATICO (ITALY)

Italy's Francesco Bagnaia won the San Marino MotoGP on Sunday to claim his fourth straight premier class triumph. The Ducati rider pipped Enea Bastianini in a thrilling win which moved him to within 30 points of reigning World champion Fabio Quartararo, who finished fifth. AFP

Anishka Biyani triumphs

MUMBAI

Six-year-old Anishka Biyani won the under-6 Open for girls in the Malaysian age-group rapid chess championship on Sunday. Anishka scored four points out of a possible six to clinch the title. PTI

Gujarat Giants signs up Gayle

NEW DELHI

Adani Sportsline owned Gujarat Giants picked up Chris Gayle on Saturday. The Jamaican all-rounder will play alongside Virender Sehwag as the Legends League Cricket kicks off from September 16 at the Eden Gardens, Kolkata. ANI

Nishimoto, Yamaguchi win Japan Open titles

OSAKA

Home favourites Kenta Nishimoto and Akane Yamaguchi won the men's and women's singles titles respectively at the Japan Open badminton tournament here on Sunday.

The results (finals): Men: Kenta Nishimoto (Jpn) bt Chou Tien-chen (Tpe) 21-19, 21-23, 21-17; **women:** Akane Yamaguchi (Jpn) bt An Se-young (Kor) 21-9, 21-15.

Aravindh, a worthy champion

Draws with Praggnanandhaa in final round to take the title with 7.5 points

DUBAI OPEN

SPORTS BUREAU

Precisely a week before turning 23, Aravindh Chithambaram emerged the worthy champion of the Dubai Open chess tournament after a final-round draw with sparring partner R. Praggnanandhaa in Dubai on Sunday.

Less than 24 hours after stunning second seed Arjun Erigaisi and taking the sole lead, 13th seed Aravindh signed the peace with fourth seed Praggnanandhaa in 38 moves to take the title with 7.5 points from nine rounds.

The two-time former National champion received $13,000 and a trophy after topping a formidable field that saw seven Indians among the top-10 finishers.

Aravindh. • TWITTER/CHESSCOM_IN

Top-seeded Russian Alexandr Predke was runner-up after a five-way tie for the second spot at seven points. Praggnanandhaa, Abhijeet Gupta, Sammed Shete and S.P. Sethuraman followed in that order.

Arjun, whose ploy of trading his queen for a rook and a bishop by the 17th move backfired against Aravindh eventually resulted in a 45-move defeat on Saturday evening, took the seventh spot following a eight-way tie.

Important results (Indians unless stated):

Ninth round: Aravindh Chithambaram (7.5) bt R. Praggnanandhaa (7); Alexandr Predke (FIDE, 7) drew with Ahmed Adly (Egy, 6.5); Harsha Bharathakoti (6.5) drew with Arjun Erigaisi (6.5); Abhijeet Gupta (7) bt Sandipan Chanda (6); Arghyadip Das (6) lost to S.P. Sethuraman (7); Aram Hakobyan (Arm, 6) lost to Sammed Shete (7).

Eighth round: Praggnanandhaa drew with Predke; Arjun lost to Aravindh; Adly drew with Abhijeet; Sethuraman drew with Hakobyan; Chanda bt Vladimir Akopian (USA); Aghyadip bt Rinat Jumabayev (Kaz); Ortik Nigmatov (Uzb) lost to Harsha.

Final standings (top-14): 1. Aravindh (7.5 points), 2-6. Predke (FIDE), Praggnanandhaa, Abhijeet, Sammed, Sethuraman (7 each); 7-14. Arjun, Alexandar Indjic (Srb), Seyed Kian Poormosavi (Iri), Harsha, Ziaur Rahman (Ban), Adly (Egy), Samvel Ter-Sahakyan (Arm) and Arjun Kalyan (6.5 each).

Asiad, CWG medallist boxer Sah no more

GENERAL

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOLKATA

Asian Games and Commonwealth Games bronze medal winning boxer Birju Sah passed away in Jamshedpur on Saturday night. He was 48 and is survived by his wife, a son and a daughter.

Sah bagged bronze medals in the light flyweight category at the 1993 Asian junior championships and 1994 Asian Games and Commonwealth Games. Later, he went through financial crisis and took up an odd job of a security guard with a private firm in Jamshedpur for some time.

"It's a sad day. He was a talented boxer who I groomed at the Tata Boxing Centre. He used to train youngsters with me at the Birsa Boys Club," said Ernest Lakra, a former boxer and a reputed coach.

Birju Sah.

Sah also coached the Jharkhand team at the National championships.

ROUND-UP

Atharva and Ayushi take the honours

BENGALURU

Atharva Nawarange and Ayushi B. Godse claimed the under-13 boys' and girls' singles respectively at the M.S. Ramaiah Memorial State-ranking table tennis tournament being held here.

The results: Boys: Atharva Nawarange bt Shashank Keshav Rao 8-11, 11-8, 11-8, 11-8, 13-11. **Girls:** Ayushi B. Godse bt Hiya Singh 11-8, 7-11, 11-6, 14-12, 11-7.

National tenpin bowling from today

The 31st National Tenpin Bowling Championship will get underway at Amoeba, Church Street, from Monday. 146 bowlers (including 28 women) are participating in the six-day event. Akaash Ashok Kumar and Sabeena Athica are the defending champions in the men's and women's sections.

Mushfiqur retires from T20Is

'Keeper-batter to focus on Tests, ODIs

Moving on: Mushfiqur, after having a lean run in recent T20Is, has bid adieu to the format • AP

CRICKET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DHAKA

Bangladesh wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim on Sunday announced his retirement from T20Is to focus on the longer formats.

The 35-year-old former Bangladesh captain, however, intends to continue playing franchise cricket "when the opportunity arrives".

"I would like to announce my retirement from T20 INTERNATIONALS and focus on Test and ODI formats of the game," Mushfiqur wrote on his *Twitter*.

"I will be available to play franchise leagues when the opportunity arrives. Looking forward to proudly represent my nation in the two formats," he added.

Lahiri moves to fourth

LIV GOLF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BOLTON (US)

India's Anirban Lahiri compiled another fine round of 5-under 65 to go with his first round 66 and moved into fourth place at the LIV Golf Invitational Series event.

Lahiri was 9-under and just three behind the leader, Talor Gooch (63-65), while Joaquin Neumann was second with rounds of 64-65. Dustin Johnson (67-63) was third.

Lahiri, making his LIV debut, had seven birdies and two bogeys after a bogey-free first round.

Gooch enters the final round at The International's Oaks Course with a one-stroke lead at 12 under after shooting a 5-under 65.

Johnson, the 4 Aces captain, was in solo third at 10 under after his 7-under 63.

Verstappen sends home fans into raptures

The Red Bull driver makes it four-in-a-row, extends lead to 109 points

DUTCH GP

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ZANDVOORT (NETHERLANDS)

Formula One championship leader Max Verstappen made quick work of a safety car restart to win the Dutch Grand Prix on Sunday in front of 100,000 adoring fans, and make it four straight wins for the first time in his F1 career.

Verstappen's 10th victory matched his tally from last year and the Red Bull driver extended his lead to 109 points. With seven races left, a second straight title is looking increasingly likely as his challengers – Ferrari's Charles Leclerc and Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez in joint second – continue to fall further back.

George Russell finished second for Mercedes ahead of Leclerc, with Lewis Hamilton fourth.

Verstappen looked to be coasting to victory when a safety car came out on Lap 56 after the engine cut out on Valtteri Bottas' Alfa Romeo. Verstappen changed tyres and was behind leader Hamilton with 12 laps left.

Max impact: Verstappen cashed in on a safety car restart to register his 10th win of the season. • GETTY IMAGES

But Hamilton was on a slower medium tyre and Verstappen on the quicker softs left the British driver pretty much a sitting duck, much like when he lost the title to Verstappen at last years season-ending Abu Dhabi GP.

Hamilton misjudged his restart and Verstappen overtook him straight away to bring a huge roar from the Orange Army. The Dutchman also took an extra point for the fastest lap.

An angry Hamilton took it out on his team, using an expletive on radio to tell them he wasn't happy about not swapping for new tyres under safety car, when Russell had. It got worse as Leclerc overtook Hamilton to move to third.

The results: 1. Verstappen (Red Bull) 1:36:42.773; 2. Russell (Mercedes) +4.071s; 3. Leclerc (Ferrai) +10.929s; 4. Hamilton (Mercedes) +13.016s; 5. Perez (Red Bull) +18.168s; 6. Alonso (Alpine) +18.754s; 7. Norris (McLaren) +19.306s; 8. Sainz (Ferrari) +20.916s; 9. Ocon (Alpine) +21.117s; 10. Stroll (Aston Martin) +22.459s; 11. Gasly (AlphaTauri) +27.009s; 12. Albon (Williams) +30.390s; 13. Mick Schumacher (Haas) +32.995s; 14. Vettel (Aston Martin) +36.007s; 15. Magnussen (Haas) +36.869s; 16. Guanyu (Alfa Romeo) +37.320s; 17. Ricciardo (McLaren) +37.764s; 18. Latifi (Williams) +1 lap; **DNF:** Bottas (Alfa Romeo); Tsunoda (AlphaTauri).

Standings (top-5): Drivers: 1. Verstappen 310 points; 2. Leclerc and Perez 201; 4. Russell 188; 5. Sainz 175; **Constructors:** 1. Red Bull 511; 2. Ferrari 376, 3. Mercedes 346; 4. Alpine 125; 5. McLaren 101.

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